

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Chile: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRCL004
Glide No. FL-2008-000069-CHL13
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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 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.

Summary: CHF 220,000 (USD 209,523 or EUR 135,218) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 9 June 2008 to support the Chilean Red Cross (CRC) in delivering emergency relief assistance to 4,000 beneficiaries.

A detailed assessment showed that most of the affected population's emergency needs had been met by the Chilean government. Therefore, the CRC, with the support of the International Federation, revised the plan of action that contemplated reaching 800 families to assist 225 families by implementing a cash distribution programme.

Between 19 and 27 May 2008, a yellow alert was issued by the National Emergency Office (Oficina Nacional de Emergencia, Ministry of the Interior -,ONEMI) in 7 of the 15 regions in Chile, as a result of the heavy rains; in the Maule region the overflowed rivers of Mataquito and Lontue affected hundreds of families.



CRC volunteers during the cash voucher distribution programme. Source: Chilean Red Cross

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The situation

Constant rain affected several regions in Chile between 19 and 27 May 2008. The Chilean government declared a yellow alert in the regions of Valparaiso and Los Lagos due to the intense rain and overflowed rivers. The rivers in the Maule region, especially the Mataquito River forced the temporary displacement of approximately 1,500 families from the municipality of Licanten. Moreover, the bursting of the banks of the Lontue River in the municipality of Molina prompted the evacuation of approximately 500 families.

On 3 June 2008, ONEMI established a temporary preventive alert for the entire zone, including the regions of O'Higgins and Bio Bio, as a result of the rain. During the first two weeks after the floods, ONEMI distributed relief items through the local authorities. ONEMI also mobilized cleaning teams to the affected areas and the local fire department assisted in cleaning the flooded streets and homes.

The flood water levels diminished after the first days of the emergency, allowing the displaced families to return to their homes and start to work on recovery activities. As a consequence of the difficult financial situation of some families, the lack of employment in the agricultural sector, and the harsh conditions of the winter season, several families could not replace their goods lost or damaged by the floods.

The Chilean government and other organizations distributed complementary relief items after damage and needs assessments were completed. This assistance met the basic needs of the affected people for the first weeks after the emergency.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

At the onset of the emergency, the local Chilean Red Cross branch in Curicó in the region of Maule evacuated approximately 50 people. The CRC provided first aid care to the people in community shelters using Urgent Medical Care System ambulances (Sistema de Atención Médica de Urgencia – SAMU), installed a telecommunications system and carried out rapid damage and needs assessments in the affected areas.

The CRC planned to benefit 800 families in the affected areas through the provision of psychosocial support and emergency relief items such as food parcels and hygiene kits. The Regional Intervention Team (RIT) members and local Red Cross volunteers carried out thorough damage and need assessments in two of the most affected communities of Licanten and Molina. The evaluations determined that low-income households, subsisting mainly on agricultural activities, did not have the resources to recover from the floods. These families earn a minimum wage of USD 250 per month.

The CRC concluded that basic emergency needs were already met by ONEMI. Assessments indicated that those affected needed the replacement of household appliances such as: refrigerators, portable gas heaters, seeds for small scale gardens, clothing, mattresses, cash, furniture and school supplies. Therefore the plan of action was revised to implement a cash voucher programme for 225 affected families in order for them to be able to meet their needs as they saw fit.

A study of the capacity of the marketplace to absorb a potential cash or voucher-based early recovery programme was conducted with the local CRC volunteers. Interviews with community members and local officials, together with observation and participation in local markets revealed that these were well-developed and functioning normally two weeks after the disaster. The only noted inflation encountered was a 10 to 20 per cent rise in the price of charcoal being used to dry the interiors of previously flooded homes.

A well functioning banking system offered the possibility of implementing a distribution of cheques, thus avoiding security risks related to the transfer of cash. After consideration of the different alternatives, it was therefore determined that a distribution of cheques for the total value of the assistance, corresponding roughly to a monthly minimum wage, would be the way to proceed with the programme.

On 29 June 2008, the first pilot distribution of cheques was carried out for 22 families in Molina, completing the remaining families on 5 July 2008. 58 per cent (130 of 225 families) of the cheques were written in the name of the women of the households, in an effort to ensure their participation in the allocation and use of the funds.

Household per household follow-up visits on the use of the cash transfer were conducted by the HNS Bank, a Regional Intervention Team member and a Disaster Management delegate at the end of July 2008, to evaluate the impact of the programme.

Staff and volunteers from the CRC local branch, regional and national level staff and volunteers were involved along all steps of the project cycle. The International Federation through the Regional Representation in Lima was involved in the design of the project (Organizational Development, promotion of Humanitarian Principles and Values) and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit provided technical support for the programme, from design to implementation to evaluation.

Progress towards objectives

The Chilean Red Cross plan of action aimed to reach 800 families, but since the government provided assistance to the majority of the affected population, the plan of action was revised to reach 225 families by implementing a cash voucher programme. In addition, this DREF operation covered the procurement of two computers to support the CRC, mobilization and distribution costs as well as volunteer mobilization.

Cash distribution programme

Objective: To support the rehabilitation process and to contribute to early recovery activities by supplying monetary resources to 225 of the most vulnerable families affected by the flooding in the municipalities of Licantén, Molina and Curico.

Specific objectives

- Reinforce the economic security of the household;
- Contribute to safe living conditions through drying and repair of houses;
- Prevent the selling of assets to cope with the situation;
- Avoid health related issues through improvement of the sanitary conditions;
- Allow for the reactivation of family-sized agricultural plots;
- Alleviate the effects of lost wages combined with material losses;
- Boosting of local economy.

Activities completed:

- Conduct surveys among the communities to learn what their immediate needs are for early recovery;
- Training of volunteers from the local CRC branches to participate in the cash distribution programme;
- Selection of the most vulnerable beneficiaries;
- Distribution of funds (in the form of cheques) to the beneficiaries;
- Monitoring of the usage of funds by the beneficiaries.

Impact:

The surveys indicated that the affected families needed basic household items such as: refrigerators, mattresses, food, and clothing among other items. With the distribution of cheques, the affected families were able to acquire the articles most important for their recovery. Each family had different needs since not all of them sustained the same type of damages, therefore the monetary resources were used as each family deemed necessary, either to repair homes, buy household items or to obtain sufficient resources to maintain their family. A total of 225 families in the Maule region received a cheque for USD 250 through the programme to facilitate a faster recovery process. In addition, the programme met their basic needs and assisted them in resuming their daily activities.

The project addressed and met basic emergency needs for the target group. The following table shows how the money was used by the families reached:

Commodity/Service	Frequency*
Food	87
Furniture, electrical appliances	77
Clothes, bed sheets	59
Gas/wood/coal (for cooking/drying/heating purposes)	41
House repairs and improvement	31
Income generation means (seeds, tools, etc)	20
Basic utility services (electricity, public water), or debts	22
Health (visits to doctors & medicine)	15
Down payment towards the purchase of a new home	4
Undue use	4
Had not spent the money yet	3

* Based on 146 cases surveyed out of the 225 total population

The distribution above highlights the fact that a large proportion of people used the funds towards basic emergency needs, such as food and shelter, but that flexibility also allowed them to use it in their early recovery towards economic security.

It also shows that, despite persistent myths in regards to cash transfer programmes, only a very small proportion of the funds was declared to have been spent on uses other than those agreed.

In an effort to increase female participation in the decision-making process for the use of funds, 58 per cent of the cheques were written in the name of the main female figure in the household.

Challenges:

A cash distribution programme is a viable option to respond to an emergency. However, in order to be successful, the National Society needs to be ensure awareness and improve assessment capacities in the field and benefit from the necessary conditions for its application.

Conclusion

Lessons learned:

The Chilean Red Cross learned a new system for assisting people affected by disasters. Thanks to the DREF funds and the deployment of an International Federation Disaster Management delegate and RIT members, not only did 225 families receive cash to procure items they lost, but CRC volunteers also learned how to conduct specific surveys and assessments for the cash distribution programme. The CRC increased its capacity significantly with this new programme and will consider implementing it in future emergency operations, if deemed necessary.

Furthermore, the concept was integrated in the International Federation's regional strategy and has been used and analyzed as a case study as the region's first cash distribution programme. An educational video has been completed for training material.

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:

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRCL004 - Chile - Floods

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/6-2009/9
Budget Timeframe	2008/6-2009/9
Appeal	MDRCL004
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Response to Appeal

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	220,000					220,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	126,533					126,533
C5. Other Income	126,533					126,533
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	126,533					126,533
D. Total Funding = B + C	126,533					126,533
Appeal Coverage	58%					58%

II. Balance of Funds

	Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	126,533					126,533
E. Expenditure	-126,533					-126,533
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

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III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)	220,000						220,000	
Supplies								
Clothing & textiles	887	886				886	1	
Food	29,816						29,816	
Utensils & Tools	29,400						29,400	
Other Supplies & Services	58,610	58,610				58,610	1	
Total Supplies	118,713	59,495				59,495	59,218	
Transport & Storage								
Storage	9,000						9,000	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	3,500	3,883				3,883	-383	
Total Transport & Storage	12,500	3,883				3,883	8,617	
Personnel								
International Staff	1,650	5,335				5,335	-3,685	
Regionally Deployed Staff	7,450	4,451				4,451	3,000	
National Staff	5,700	589				589	5,111	
National Society Staff		7,226				7,226	-7,226	
Total Personnel	14,800	17,601				17,601	-2,801	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	9,000	2,049				2,049	6,951	
Total Workshops & Training	9,000	2,049				2,049	6,951	
General Expenditure								
Travel	8,041	7,714				7,714	327	
Information & Public Relation	1,000	4,522				4,522	-3,522	
Office Costs	3,324	3,821				3,821	-497	
Communications	2,000	4,074				4,074	-2,074	
Professional Fees		141				141	-141	
Financial Charges	31,647	15,008				15,008	16,639	
Total General Expenditure	46,012	35,280				35,280	10,732	
Programme Support								
Program Support	18,975	8,225				8,225	10,750	
Total Programme Support	18,975	8,225				8,225	10,750	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	220,000	126,533				126,533	93,467	
VARIANCE (C - D)		93,467				93,467		