

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Chile: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRCL005
Glide No. FL-2008-000155-CHL
9 September, 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.

CHF 50,000 (USD 45,455 or EUR 30,960) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in order to jump start their early relief and assessment activities. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: On 31 August, 2008, heavy rain has been affecting especially, the ninth region in Chile, La Araucania causing flash floods and landslides in 31 communities. This DREF operation is focused on providing initial support to the Chilean Red Cross (CRC).

More detailed information will become available once damage and need assessments are completed.

[<click here for contact details,](#)
[or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

On 31 August, heavy rain and floods deeply affected the regions of Maule, Bio Bio, La Araucania Los Lagos and Los Rios in **Chile**. Landslides and overflowed rivers have destroyed roadways, houses, bridges and other infrastructure. Landslides have blocked many of the roadways within the communities. Four deaths were reported. More than 81,755 people are affected due to the floods and approximately 10,922 houses have been damaged or destroyed. In the region of Biobio, two bridges were damaged and one collapsed. Municipal workers have programmed to start repairing damages on 8 September. In the region of La Araucania, due to the overflow of the Rehue river, the water supply was shut down. The municipality and the fire department will be responsible of restoring the service shortly. The region of Los Lagos was affected by floods in May 2008 affecting some 2,400 families and the Chilean Red Cross is still carrying out a relief operation for that emergency.

The president of Chile declared the affected region of La Araucania as a catastrophe zone. Evacuation of people in isolated areas has begun, but some 4,713 people still remain isolated. Five air force helicopters and an airplane are assisting with the evacuation activities. The National Emergency Office (Oficina Nacional de Emergencia- Ministry of Interior – ONEMI) has been providing assistance to the affected people since the night of 31 August. ONEMI dispatched three trucks containing food items, zinc sheets, mattresses, blankets, disposable diapers and clothes. The director of ONEMI along with regional technical groups and Emergency Operation Committees continue to work in the affected zones coordinating actions to start rehabilitation activities.

Table: # of people and houses affected by region

REGION	People		Housing		
	Affected	Sheltered	Minor damages	Major damages	Destroyed
Bíobio	1,509	0	728	157	14
La Araucanía	78,890	1,466	5,765	4,120	25
Los Ríos	576	1	112	0	1

Los Lagos	780	0	0	0	0
Total	81,755	1,467	6,605	4,277	40

Coordination and partnerships

The International Federation through the **Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU)** has been in close contact with the Chilean Red Cross (CRC). The CRC has provided information about the current situation with initial assessment reports provided by ONEMI; ONEMI's early warning system is constantly monitoring the affected regions that are in yellow alert.

PADRU is coordinating the deployment of a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member to Chile to support the CRC with their relief activities.

In the zones affected by the floods, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is funding projects concerning disaster risk reduction. Based on further assessments, it will be determined if and how these can support the current relief operation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Ever since the emergency started, the CRC's central warehouse located in Santiago, capital of Chile, started to collect non-perishable food items, water, hygiene and cleaning items. These items were dispatched to the Region of Araucania in order to be distributed among the most affected. More than 10 tonnes of humanitarian aid including food items, sanitary and clothing items have been distributed to more than 500 families in the communities of Saavedra, Temuco, Padre las Casas, Loncoche and Cherquenco, located in the region of la Araucania.

The CRC has maintained coordination between the main branch and the Regional Committee in Araucania. The CRC has been assisting in the emergency shelters and is promoting safe hygiene and health practices in the affected regions. A National Intervention Team (NIT) of 13 people along with two 4 x 4 vehicles in the community of Saavedra were assisting 500 families by implementing water and sanitation activities.

A new damage and need assessment evaluation will be completed in order to elaborate a plan of action which will focus on the communities of Villarica and Saavedra.

In May 2008, DREF funds were also allocated to assist the Chilean Red Cross to respond to similar floods experienced. The funds were used to implement a cash voucher programme that helped the beneficiaries to recover from the floods.

The needs

This DREF operation will support initial costs for the **Chilean Red Cross** to perform initial damage and need assessments. Once all evaluations are completed and immediate needs identified, a DREF update with detailed objectives will be published. The areas the objectives will focus on are emergency relief, early recovery and capacity building of the National Society. Additional DREF funds may be requested to fulfil their needs.

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

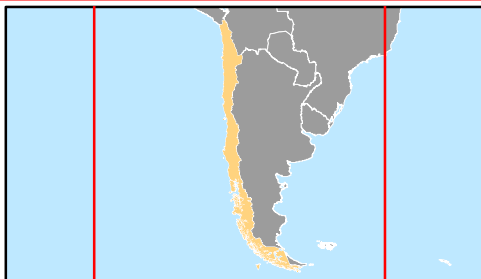
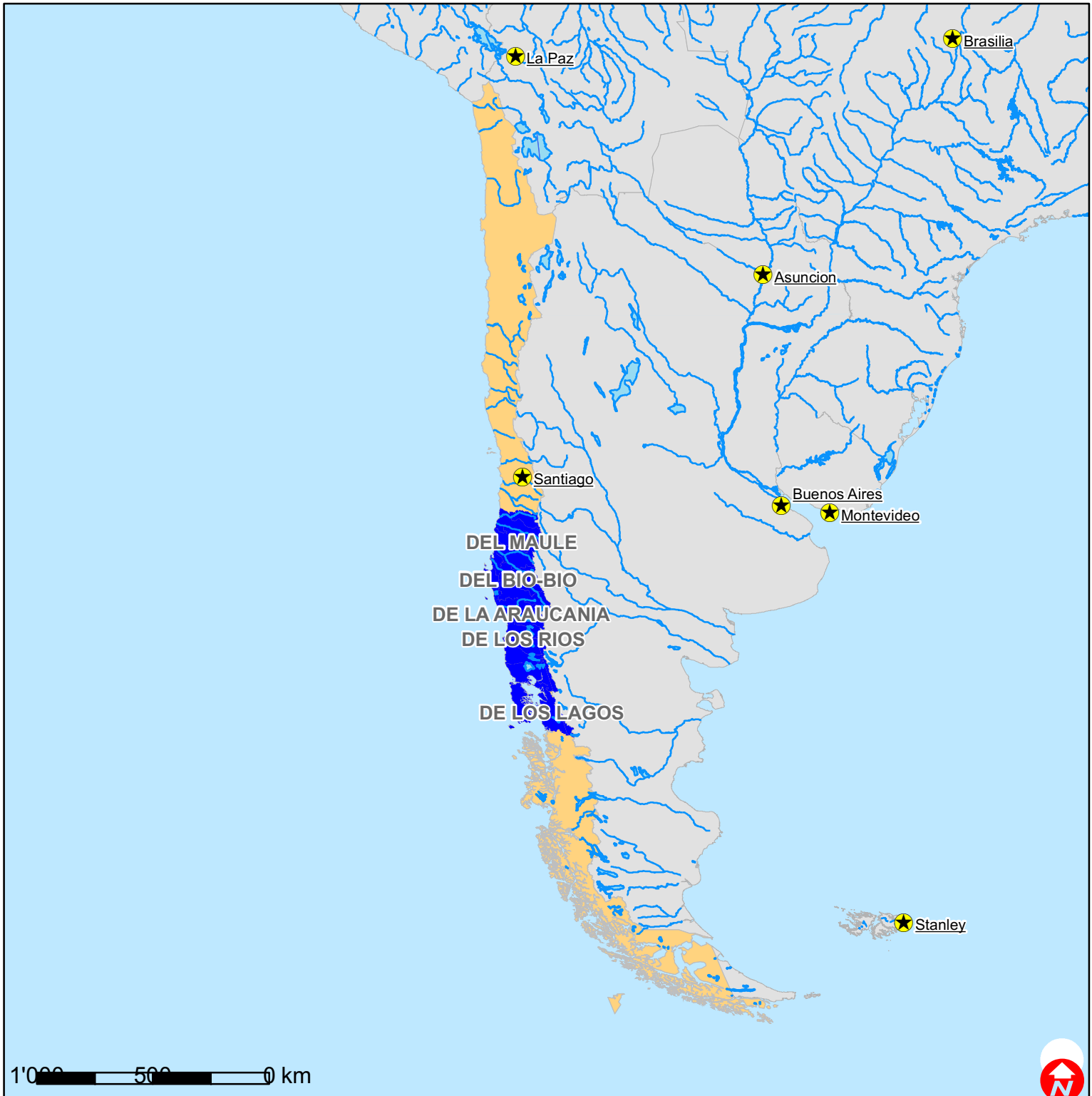
For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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



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On 1 September, heavy rain and floods deeply affected the regions of Maule, Bio Bio, La Araucania Los Lagos and Los Rios in Chile. Landslides and overflowed rivers have destroyed roadways and houses. As of 6 Sept., the government reports a total of 27,157 homeless people. There have been four people reported dead. The total number of affected people in the regions of Maule, Bio Bio, La Araucania, Los Lagos and Los Rios ascends to 81,755 people. There have been 6,605 houses reported with minor damages and 40 houses destroyed.

