

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Colombia: Volcano

DREF operation n° MDRxx000
Glide No. VO-2008-000046-COL
19 April, 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 103,000 (USD 103,000 or EUR 65,438) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the national society in delivering immediate assistance to some 2,250 families. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The Nevado del Huila volcano in Colombia began an eruptive process on April 14, 2008. There was a red alert I (imminent or ongoing eruption) emitted but was downgraded to orange level (II) (eruption in the next days or weeks due to the decrease in the number of seismological events). This DREF is focused on the purchase of relief items (food and non-food), disaster risk activities vehicle leasing and water and sanitation activities.



The Nevado del Huila volcano in Colombia.
Source: Reuters

This operation is expected to be implemented in three months, and will therefore be completed by 18 July, 2008; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 18 October, 2008).

[<click here for contact details>](#)

The situation

On 14 April, according to the Volcanologic and Seismologic Observatory of Popayán in Colombia, the Nevado del Huila volcano, located along the Andean mountain range in the departments of Cauca, Huila and Tolima began an eruptive process. In consequence, the Colombian Institute of Geology and Minery (Instituto Colombiano de Geología y Minería – INGEOMINAS) declared a Red Alert Level I (imminent or ongoing eruption). This level of alert was subsequently downgraded to Orange Level (II): Eruption in the next days or weeks due to the decrease in the number of seismological events.

Local authorities, particularly the regional and local committees for disaster prevention and assistance in the municipalities nearby the volcano (Nátaga, La Plata, Paicol and Tesalia), are keeping their emergency and

contingency plans activated. Electricity is being re-established which was suspended in the small town of Belalcazar (Páez). Approximately 600 families have been evacuated following these procedures, although some are now tending their fields during the day because of the decreased level of alert. The following chart shows the number of people evacuated by department:

DEPARTMENT	MUNICIPALITY	PEOPLE	FAMILIES
CAUCA	PAEZ	2500	500
	INZA	250	50
HUILA	LA PLATA	50	15
	PAICOL	90	15
	TESALIA	50	8
	NATAGA	65	12
TOTAL		3005	600

To date no affected areas are reported; neither are changing levels in the rivers. The alert level remains in Orange (II).

Coordination and partnerships

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) along with the National System of Prevention and Attention for Disasters (Sistema Nacional de Prevencion y Atencion de Desastres – SNPAD) and the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) will be performing several humanitarian actions under the national contingency plan framework in order to reduce risks. They will evacuate high risk zones specially where there is armed conflict and in coordination with the ICRC in order to guarantee a safe access. In coordination with SNAPD, the CRCS through their local branches will participate in the application of existing early alert mechanisms. The contingency plan project DIPECHO-CRCS-French Red Cross, which contemplates disaster preparedness, early alert systems, institutional strengthening and school emergency plan, will also be implemented.

The CRCS, in coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) has requested the deployment of a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member specializing in water and sanitation to support the operation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Colombian Red Cross Society has been constantly monitoring the evolvement of the situation and has mobilized volunteers to attend the needs of those affected by the disaster. This DREF allocation will provide the National Society to assist up to 2,250 affected families.

The funds will go towards the purchase, transport and distribution of 100 tents, distribution of food and non-food items, disaster risk reduction activities, the lease of two 4x4 vehicles, the operation and repositioning of a water and sanitation unit, the deployment of a water and sanitation RIT in support of the operation and the strengthening of the CRCS branch in Belalcazar.

The needs

The identified immediate needs for this operation are two all terrain vehicles (on loan by PADRU-International Federation), a water treatment unit, VHF and HF equipments and tents. As the situation evolves, and further assessments are completed, additional needs will be incorporated.

The proposed operation

The CRCS Plan of Action (PoA) aims to respond to the needs of 2,250 affected families and increase the capacity of the National Society in disaster response. In case the situation worsens, assessments will be re-evaluated and the objectives will be adapted accordingly.

Risk Reduction and Preparedness

Objective: 2,250 families affected by the volcano will benefit from the disaster risk reduction activities

Activities planned:

- Evacuation processes will be supported in the high risk areas;
- The SNPAD and the CRCS will activate the early alert systems;
- The communities will receive educational information on basic first aid care and planning in case disaster strikes.

Water and Sanitation

Objective: A water and sanitation unit from PADRU will be deployed to the CRCS branch in Belalcazar.

The branch of Belalcazar will be provided with a water sanitation unit in order to provide safe water for the affected people.

Emergency shelter

Objective: The CRCS will pre-position and distribute 100 tents to families according to needs and preventive evacuations.

In case additional people need to be evacuated, these tents, provided by PADRU, will be readily available in case the situation worsens.

Strengthening of Capacity

Objective: Two 4 x 4 vehicles will be made available to the CRCS by PADRU for the transport of volunteers and goods for the duration of the emergency.

The Regional Fleet Base located in Panama will arrange and dispatch the two vehicles needed for this operation.

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.

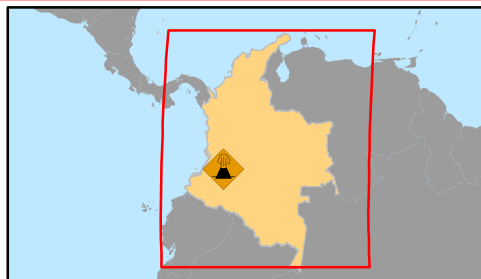
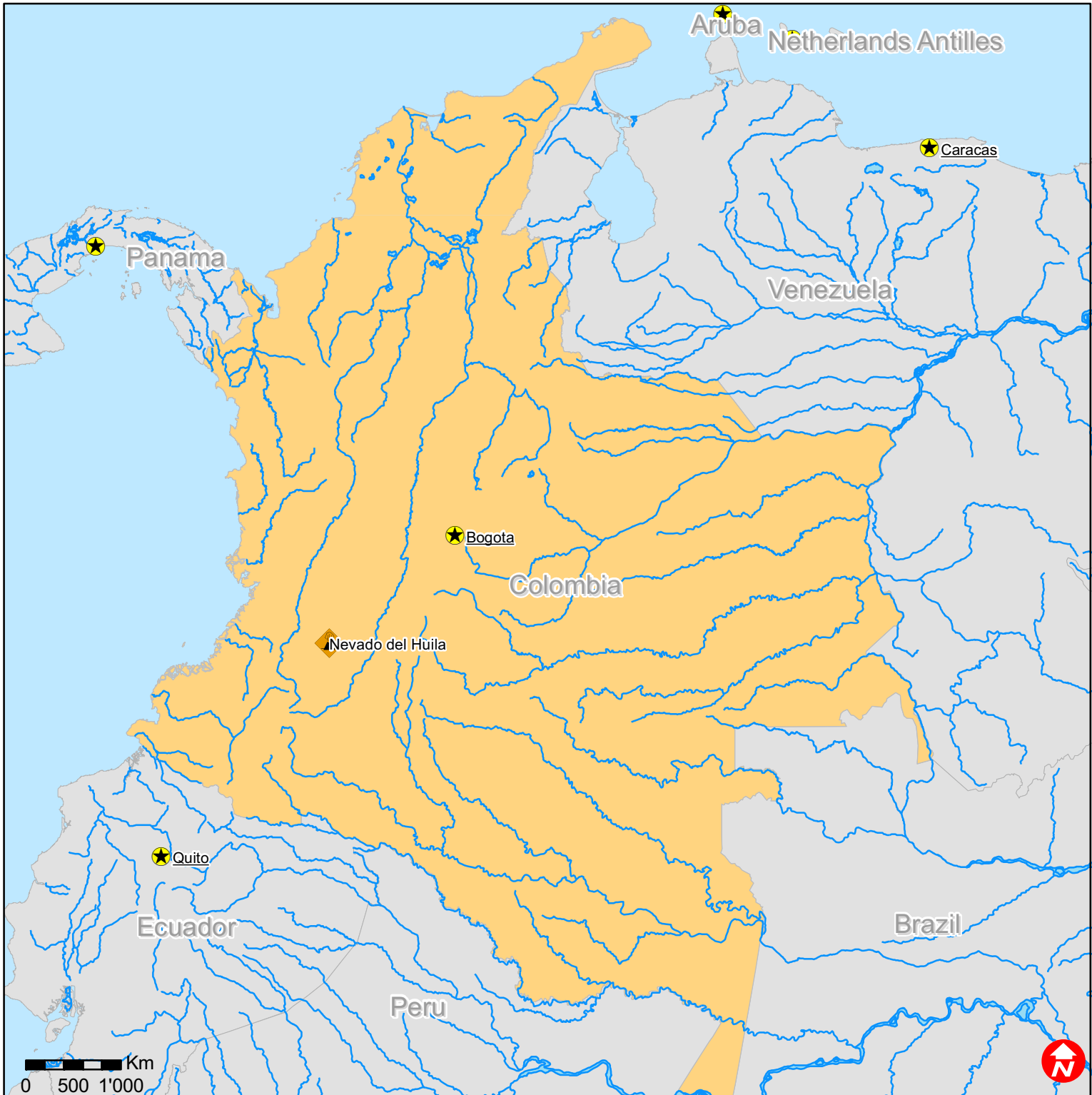
Contact information

- In Colombia: Walter Cotte, National Director of Operations and Relief, Colombian Red Cross Society, Bogotá; email: walter.cotte@cruzrojacolombiana.org; phone +571 437-6300, fax +571 473-6301
- In Lima: Giorgio Ferrario, Regional Representative of the South America Regional Representation Office; phone: + 511 221 8151; fax: + 511 441 3607; email: giorgio.ferrario@ifrc.org
- In Panama: Dario Alvarez, Acting Head of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit, Panama; phone: + 507 316 1001; fax + 507 316 1082; email: dario.alvarez@ifrc.org
- In Panama: Maria Alcazar, Resource Mobilization Coordinator, Americas; phone: + 507 380 0250; fax: + 507 317 1304; email: maria.alcazar@ifrc.org
- In Geneva: Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator for the Americas; phone: phone + 41 79 2173376; fax: + 41 22 730 0395; email pablo.medina@ifrc.org.

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