DREF operation

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Colombia: Volcanoes

DREF operation n° MDRCO005
Glide No. VO-2008-000220-COL
3 December 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 150,000 (USD 123,729 or EUR 97,634) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 3,000 beneficiaries (600 families). Unearmarked funds to reimburse DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Since April 2008, the Nevado del Huila volcano located between the departments of Cauca, Huila and Tolima, has been sporadically causing tremors and releasing gas and ashes. On 20th November the volcano erupted, unleashing mud flows along the Paez river and affecting more than 8,000 people.

The Nevado del Huila Volcano emitting gases and ash. Source: Colombian Red Cross Society

Thousands of people were evacuated thanks to the early warning system developed by the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) with support by French Red Cross and DiPECHO.

Through this DREF support, the Colombian Red Cross Society will be providing food and non-food assistance, primary health care and water and sanitation to 3,000 of the most affected people.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 3 March, 2009; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 3 June, 2009).

<Click here for the DREF budget, here for contact details, or here to view the map of the affected area>

The situation

On 20 November 2008 the Nevado del Huila volcano erupted causing three avalanches into the Paez river. Thanks to the early warning system developed by the Colombian Red Cross in close collaboration with the authorities, with technical assistance by the French Red Cross within the framework of the DiPECHO V project, 3,800 people were evacuated from the municipalities of Paez Belalcázar and Inza in the department of Cauca and Tesalia, Nataga, Paicol and La Plata in the department of Huila; thus saving many lives in the short period of time before the landslide reached the communities and villages (only six persons died, seven

are injured and other seven are missing). According to the national authorities, a similar event in 1994 had resulted in 1,200 dead and some 500 missing persons.

The three avalanches that went into the Paez river affected seven vehicular bridges, 14 pedestrian bridges, destroyed 23 homes. Also, 200 families whose houses were located in high risk areas took refuge in temporary shelters in Belalcázar . 8,864 people were affected by the avalanches and, according to reports provided by the Colombian Red Cross Relief Direction. Basic infrastructure including electric services, water systems and sewer systems has also sustained damages.

The affected people remain isolated due to the destroyed bridges that lead to their communities. All of their personal belongings such as kitchen utensils and beds have been lost or damaged. At the moment, these communities can only be reached by air.

On 21 November, an evaluation team from the National System for Disaster Preparedness and Response (Sistema Nacional de Prevención y Atención de Desastres – SNPAD) was formed to carry out damage and need assessments and determine the most urgent needs. The team was mobilized from the capital city of Bogotá to Popayán. On 22 November the level of alert was lowered to orange, meaning there is a probability of eruption within days or weeks, reason why the SNPAD maintains constant monitoring within the area. SNPAD has been coordinating the distribution of humanitarian aid donated by the community and organizations and will dispatch fuel to the affected areas in order to carry out health, communications and relief activities.

The National Road Institute (Instituto Nacional de Vías, INVIAS) has been working in the rehabilitation of two access roads in order to reach the affected areas currently isolated. The SNPAD Directorate, in coordination with the Colombian Air Force, has programmed the mobilization of personnel and food and non-food items by air. Additionally, the government has mobilized three tons of food items, mattresses and blankets to the affected people.

Coordination and partnerships

The International Federation through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representatione for the Andean Region have been in constant communication with the Colombian Red Cross Society since the onset of the emergency.

The Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) and the National System for Disaster Preparedness and Response with support of the DiPECHO project coordinated the opportune evacuation and placement of the evacuated residents. The contingency plan project implemented by DIPECHO, CRCS and the French Red Cross, which contemplates disaster preparedness, early warning systems, institutional strengthening and school emergency plans, will also be considered in the emergency response. This project estimates that by the end of 2008, the communities of Nataga, Paicol, Tesalia, La Plata, Inza and Belalcázar will have increased disaster risk awareness, increased capacity of disaster response and implementation of an early warning system through very high frequency (VHF) radio. Additionally, the lessons learned by the CRCS from the past DREF emergency in April, 2008 involving the Nevado del Huila volcano, helped to save lives during this new emergency operation.

OXFAM has also provided support and will coordinate with the CRCS by carrying out water and sanitation assessments in order to provide safe drinking water to the affected areas.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Colombian Red Cross Society has constantly been monitoring the evolution of the emergency and activated its crisis room where early assessments and decisions of the situation are made. The CRCS activated the early warning system in coordination with the SNPAD which allowed evacuating people in the high risk areas. There are currently 140 volunteers supporting the emergency activities.

CRCS volunteers distributing humanitarian aid donated by several organizations in Belalcazar. Source: CRCS

The CRCS relief director visited the affected area to perform an initial assessment and determine the most urgent needs. Moreover, the local Red Cross branch in Cauca deployed a National Intervention Team (NIT) specialized in relief, Two NIT members specializing in water and sanitation and relief were also deployed to support the assessments carried out by OXFAM.

There are 900 people sheltered in a temporary shelter established by the CRCS. The CRCS has as emergency pre-positioned stock 100 tarpaulins and a water and sanitation unit for the use in this emergency. In addition the CRCS has opened back accounts to gather funds to attend the needs of those people affected. The local branches have received 342 tonnes of food and 30 tonnes of non-food items donated from different organizations.

The local branch in Cauca continues to monitor the situation in accordance with the procedures indicated by their early warning system.

In addition, with the support from the Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Colombian Red Cross is in a process of change in order to enhance its capacities to face the many humanitarian challenges of its country. While the disaster has involved its operational departments, the Colombian Red Cross has decided not to postpone its General Assembly. The whole governance of the National Society has renewed its full commitment to the process of change.

The needs

Beneficiary selection:

After the initial damage and need assessments were completed, the CRCS identified the following as the most immediate needs:

- Food and non-food items.
- Adequate supply of safe drinking water.
- Improvement of the temporary shelter in Belalcázar .
- Psychosocial support and primary health care.
- Operational costs sustained by the National Society to carry out the planned activities.

The proposed operation

The CRCS plan of action aims to reach 600 families that have been affected by the Nevado del Huila volcano with food and non-food items, first aid care and psychosocial support as well as the improvement of the temporary shelter in Belalcázar . The DREF funds will cover all operational costs sustained by the National Society.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective 1: 600 families (3,000 people) will benefit from the provision of relief items to recover from the effects of the volcano.

Each family will receive two food parcels containing:

No.	Food parcel
1	2 lbs of lentils
2	1 lb of corn flour
3	3 lbs of rice
4	2 lbs of sugar
5	2 lbs of beans de frijol

6	1 lb of salt
7	2 lbs of panela
8	1 lb of coffee
9	1 lb of chocolate
10	1,000 cc of cooking oil
11	400 grs milk powder
12	500 grs Guava paste
13	1,370 grs of tuna

Each family will receive one the following non-food items:

Hygiene kit	Kitchen kit	Crockery kit
3 toothbrushes for adults	1 pot	4 plastic bowls
2 toothbrushes for children	1 bucket	4 plastic plates for bowls
1 toothpaste (150 cc)	1 aluminum pot	4 plastic cups
4 units of bath soap (150 gr)	1.26 cm wooden spoon	4 aluminum spoons
2 packs of feminine hygiene pads	Grinder	
2 razors	1 match box	
1 plastic comb		
1 laundry soap (300 gr)		
2 units of cotton towels		
2 toilet paper rolls		
1 package of 6 units of cloth diapers		
1 safety pin for diapers		

Activities planned:

- Conduct needs assessments, census and beneficiary targeting.
- Procurement of relief supplies according to Federation procedures.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end-user.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distribution.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Objective: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion to 600 families for three months.

Activities planned:

- Assess the existing coverage with a view of ensuring availability of an adequate water supply.
- Assess water quality in the affected areas.
- Provide safe water to 600 families as damaged systems are restored.
- Provide potable water and promote appropriate sanitation practices.
- Capacity trainings in water handling.
- Distribution of 1,800 mosquito nets (3 per family).
- Distribution of brochures with key messages.
- Development of a hygiene campaign and garbage disposal procedures.

Emergency shelter

Objective: To improve the temporary shelter in Belalcázar to provide better living conditions to the evacuated people.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Procurement of flooring, wall and division materials.

Emergency health

Objective: The immediate health risks of the emergency on the affected population are reduced through the provision of basic health services and psychosocial support for 600 families (3,000 people) for up to three months.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Identify most vulnerable groups concerning health within the affected communities.
- Design and implement intervention strategies in promotion and prevention.
- Educate the community on possible acute diarrhoea and respiratory infection outbreaks.
- Provide basic health care to 600 of the most affected families.
- Provide psychosocial support to 600 of the most affected families.
- Schedule visits to the most vulnerable families.

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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- **In Lima:** Giorgio Ferrario, Regional Representative for the Andean Region; phone: (511) 221 8151; fax: (511) 441 3607; email: giorgio.ferrario@ifrc.org
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<DREF Budget and map below; or click here to return to the title page>

DREF OPERATION BUDGET SUMMARY

Annex 1

Colombia Volcano - Nevado del Huila

MDRCO005

	BUDGET CHF
RELIEF NEEDS	
Shelter	
Construction Materials	8,676
Clothing & Textiles	13,320
Food	29,700
Seeds & Plants	
Water & Sanitation	19,786
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	15,973
Other Supplies & Services	29,700
Total Relief Needs	**117,156**
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT	
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computers & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	
TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES	
Storage - Warehouse	
Distribution & Monitoring	5,500
Transport & Vehicles Costs	4,000
Service fee & Recovery	
PERSONNEL	
International Staff	
Regionally Deployed Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	4,100
Consultants	
WORKSHOPS & TRAINING	
Workshops & Training	5,800
GENERAL EXPENSES	
Travel	1,100
Information & Public Relations	
Office running costs	1,019
Communication Costs	1,200
Professional Fees	
Financial Charges	
Other General Expenses	375
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	
Programme Support - PSR	9,750
Total Operational Needs	**32,844**
DREF ALLOCATION	**150,000**

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

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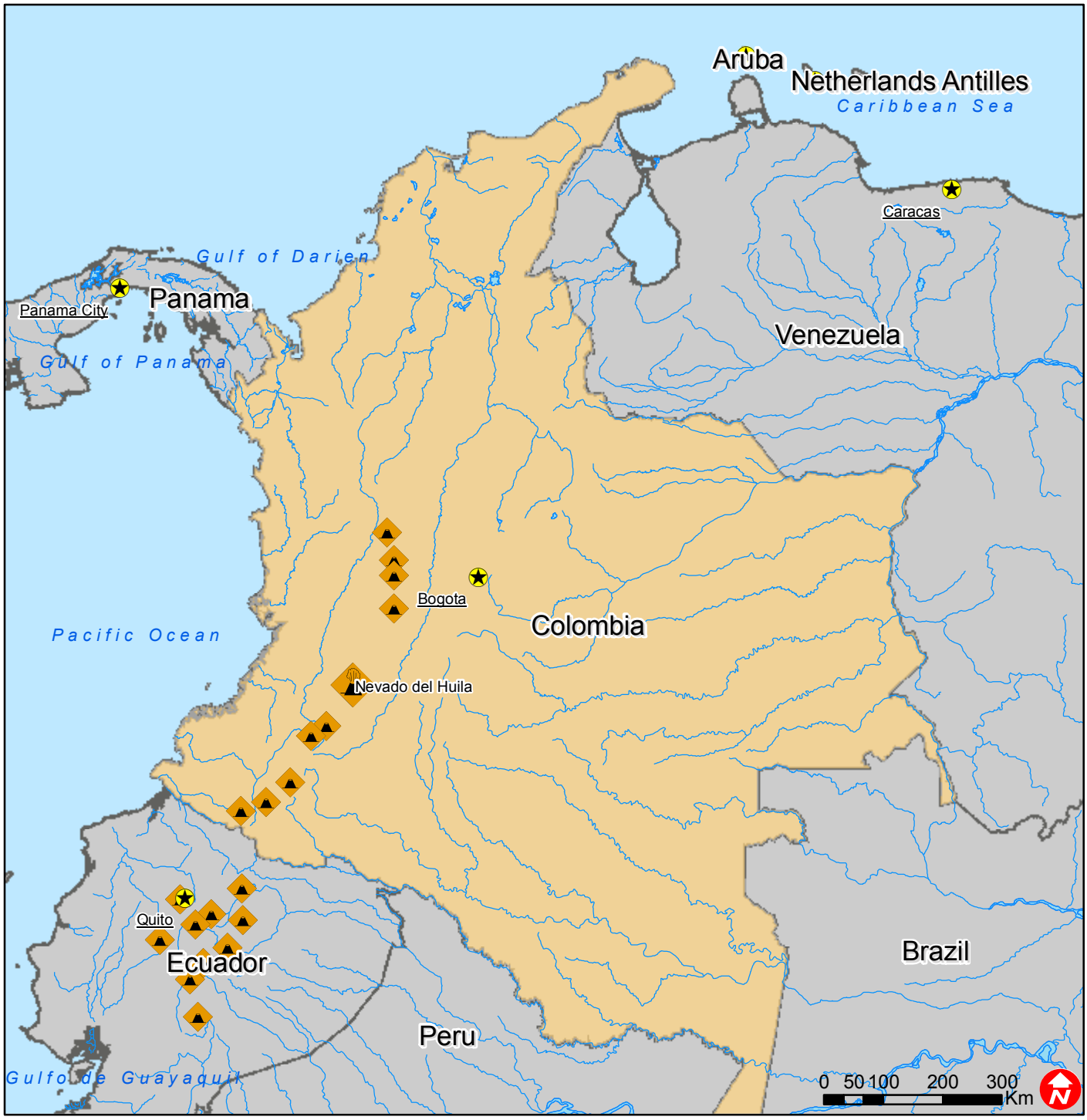

Nevado del Huila

Volcanoes

Capitals

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