DREF operation final report

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Colombia: Volcano

DREF operation n° MDRCO005
Glide No. VO-2008-000220-COL
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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 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.

Summary: CHF 150,000 (USD 123,729 or EUR 97,634) was allocated from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 3 December 2008 to support the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) in delivering immediate assistance to some 3,000 beneficiaries (600 families).

Since 29 March 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. Previously, on 18 April 2008, a DREF allocation was provided for the CRCS to assist 2,250 families and strengthen the capacity of the local branches.

On 20 November, the volcano erupted, unleashing mud flows along the Paez river affecting more than 8,000 people. This DREF operation final report reflects the activities accomplished by the Colombian Red Cross Society in the areas of food and non food distribution, water and sanitation, primary health care and psychosocial support which benefited a total of 600 families. Additionally, the infrastructure in the temporary shelters in Belalcazar was improved to provide better living conditions for the evacuated people. It is important to mention that on 21 January 2009, Colombia was affected by heavy rains in the region of Tumaco, placing an additional burden on the Colombian Red Cross Society, which also responded to this emergency.

This operation was expected to be implemented over three months, but it was extended for two additional months (until 27 May 2009) due to difficulties in reaching the beneficiaries and mobilizing the people affected as well as aid as a result of the blocked roads. Right until the end of the operation, communities remained hard to reach because of landslides caused by the pyroclastic flow (a combination of ash, mud, and water) from the volcanic activity and as a result of the lack of bridges.

A Colombian Red Cross Society volunteer drawing up beneficiary lists in the municipality of Belalcazar. Source: Colombian Red Cross Society.

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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 Society with technical assistance from the French Red Cross and within the framework of the DiPECHO V project, 3,800 people were evacuated. The evacuees were inhabitants from the municipalities of Paez Belalcázar and Inza in the department of Cauca and the municipalities of Tesalia, Nataga, Paicol and La Plata in the department of Huila. According to the national authorities, in 1994 a similar event resulted in 1,200 deaths and 500 missing persons. The following table shows the assessment results:

Category	Number of people
People evacuated during the eruption phase	6,000
People affected after the eruption	2,864
Casualties	10
Injured	7
Missing	6
Houses destroyed in urban areas	40
Houses destroyed in rural areas	7
Houses damaged in urban areas	75
Houses damaged in rural areas	14

The temporary shelters had basic infrastructure (ceilings and tarpaulins) which had been pre-positioned thrugh an earlier DREF-funded operation. These shelters allowed people to protect themselves from the rain, but improvements needed to be made to the walls, floors, community kitchen, showers and sinks to ensure better living conditions for the residents.

A Colombian Red Cross Society volunteer carrying out psychological support activities with children in Belalcázar. Source: Colombian Red Cross Society.

The three avalanches that went into the Paez River destroyed 23 homes, affected seven vehicular bridges and 14 pedestrian bridges. A total of 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 according to reports provided by the Colombian Red Cross Society Relief Office.

Up until the end of the operation, the affected people remained isolated due to the fact that the bridges that lead to their communities had been destroyed. Therefore, they could only be reached by air. All of their personal belongings such as kitchen utensils and beds were lost or damaged. Basic infrastructure including electric services, water systems and sewer systems sustained damages. The isolated people were from indigenous communities including Wila, Talaga Alta and Toez.

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 needs assessments and determine the most urgent needs. The team was mobilized from the capital city of Bogotá to Popayán. On 22 November 2008, the level of alert was lowered from red to orange, meaning that the probability of eruption went from imminent to within days or weeks, and the SNPAD maintained constant monitoring of the area.

The Colombian government in coordination with SNPAD dispatched 98 tonnes of humanitarian aid, to the departments of Huila and Cauca (Belalcázar and Inza). Among the humanitarian aid dispatched and distributed the following items were included: mattresses, blankets, food parcels, hygiene and kitchen kits,

tarpaulins and children's kits. The distribution of these items was carried out thanks to the joint efforts of the SNPAD, the Colombian Red Cross Society, the Civil Defence, the Fire department, the Colombian Air Force and the Army.

Currently, the Nevado del Huila volcano is on yellow alert. This alert level means that the volcano is unstable causing tremors and ash and gas emissions. These volcanic conditions can alter the quality of life of the population living in the surroundings. The vehicular bridges that access communities including Cohetando, Avirama, Simbola, Naranajal and Ricaute were destroyed. The only access to the communities is by using steel cables with harnesses (for people) or 4 x 4 motorcycles to transport cargo.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the onset of the emergency the Colombian Red Cross Society was constantly monitoring the evolution of the situation. The CRCS activated its early warning system in coordination with the SNPAD, which allowed people in high risk areas to be evacuated. There were 140 volunteers supporting the emergency response activities. During the second phase of the operation (distributions), 16 volunteers participated.

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 specialized in water and sanitation and relief were also deployed to support assessments carried out by OXFAM.

There were 1,000 people initially housed in a temporary shelter established by the CRCS. Currently, 40 families remain in the shelters that were rehabilitated through this DREF operation. The rehabilitated shelters have capacity for 300 families. The CRCS used emergency pre-positioned stocks including 100 tarpaulins and a water and sanitation unit from the previous DREF operation. The CRCS opened bank accounts where the civil population and the private sector could donate funds to attend the needs of those people affected. The local CRCS branches received and distributed 342 tonnes of food and 30 tonnes of non-food items donated from different organizations.

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

Progress towards objectives

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.

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.

Progress:
The CRCS in coordination with the municipality of Belalcázar carried out the selection of beneficiaries in the communities of Caloto, Toez, La Maria, El Rodeo and Guapio. The first distribution was carried out between 6 and 8 February 2009 (2 food parcels per family). The second distribution was carried out from 14 to 17 April in coordination with the local authorities (one hygiene kit and one kitchen kit per family).

A total of 646 families benefited in 13 communities in the municipality of Belalcázar; each family received 2 food parcels, 1 kitchen kit, 1 hygiene kit and 1 crockery kit. The following table shows the number of families which received assistance through the distribution of food and non-food items per community:

No.	Communities	Total benefited families
1	Los Guadalupes	50

2	El Jardin - Bajo	52
3	El Salado	33
4	La Maria	53
5	El Rodeo	30
6	Guapio	160
7	La Estrella	22
8	Calderitas	27
9	Cohetando	105
10	La Uribe	16
11	Laureles	29
12	Coquillo	42
13	Camayo	27
TOTAL		**646**

The original plan was to benefit 600 families, but thanks to donations received from the general public the CRCS was able to distribute relief items to 46 additional families.

Challenges:
The only challenge identified by the National Society was the difficulty in accessing the affected communities. The CRCS experienced elevated transport costs since they had to procure two 4 x 4 motorcycles, in order to reach the isolated communities.

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.

Progress:
The CRCS initial plan of action included distribution of safe water to the affected people. It was planned to mobilize the water treatment plant during the emergency, but after further assessments and lack of accessibility, the communities needed a longer term solution to their water needs. Therefore, the plan of action was re-adjusted and water tanks for storage were delivered. The assessments confirmed the distribution of the mosquito nets was no longer needed, since there was no threat of water-borne diseases in the affected areas.

A NIT workshop in water and sanitation took place from 24 to 30 April 2009, with 23 participants, strengthening the local CRCS branches of Cauca, Huila, Narino, Choco, Quindio, Valle del Cauca and Tolima; all of these located in high risk volcanic areas.

A total of 370 CRCS volunteers were trained through eight promotion campaigns on hygiene, water treatment and solid waste disposal. In addition, 12 community awareness-raising sessions on safe water treatment in the household, solid waste disposal, as well as water and sanitation at the community level

were carried out for 100 families in several communities in Belalcázar. The CRCS procured 2 ash cleaning kits and 100 (250 litre) tanks which were distributed to the communities of Toez and Caloto Centro from 20 to 24 April 2009.

Challenges:
The challenge with this objective was the lack of access to the communities due to blocked roads delaying the activities planned.

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.

Progress:
The CRCS completely repaired one temporary shelter module with floors and walls. The roof structures of the other two temporary shelter modules have also been repaired. Each temporary shelter module has the capacity to house 100 families. The CRCS procured the materials for the construction of the walls, which corresponds to 576m2 (each module). These repairs improved the temporary living conditions of the affected people staying in the shelter by protecting them from the winds and rain.

One of the bridges destroyed in Belalcázar. Source: Colombian Red Cross Society

Challenges:
The challenge, as mentioned earlier was the difficulty of accessing the affected communities due to blocked roads. The CRCS could not start rehabilitating the temporary shelters earlier due to the inaccessibility of the community of Belalcázar, thereby delaying the operation. Once the roads were partially cleared, the 4 x 4 motorcycles began the movement of materials and the shelter was rehabilitated, benefiting 40 families that lost their homes due to the emergency.

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.

Progress:
Volunteers from the CRCS visited communities contacting 48 community leaders to coordinate 7 workshops on health topics including psychosocial support, acute diarrhoea, respiratory infections, dermatitis and parasites, benefiting 389 participants.

Communities	Health workshops	Participants
CALOTO	1	138
TOEZ	1	52
LA MARIA	1	60
EL RODEO		56
GUAPIO	1	114
LA ESTRELLA	1	35
CALDERITAS		43
COHETANDO	1	76
LA URIBE		14
LA URELES	1	30
COQUILLO		71
CAMAYO		31
TOTAL	**7**	**718**

In total, the health activities that included prenatal care, care for the elderly, cytology, vaccinations and dental care and the 7 workshops benefited a total of 718 people. Additionally, psychosocial support was provided with an emphasis on psychological first aid due to stress symptoms related to the emergency and the feelings of mourning and crisis experienced by the affected people. Medical services were also provided on an individual basis. In addition, the CRCS carried out a psychosocial support workshop for relief agencies, municipality personnel and personnel from the educational sector with the participation of 50 people.

Conclusion

The DREF funds allowed the CRCS to provide 600 families with relief items including food parcels, hygiene kits, kitchen kits and crockery kits to assist them resume their daily activities. Thanks to the donations received from the general public, the CRCS was able to assist an additional 46 families which received basic relief items. The water and sanitation objective which included the provision of safe water was not accomplished due to the information presented by the damage and needs assessments carried out by the National Society. The plan of action was modified and instead workshops were carried out for seven local branches. The capacity of the CRCS was strengthened through the training of 370 volunteers in the areas of hygiene promotion, water treatment, and solid waste disposal.

The response capacity of the CRCS local branches in Cauca and Huila have been strengthened through this and previous DREF operations and well as disaster preparedness projects of the National Society, especially in regards to volcanic eruption threats. CRCS volunteers installed early warning systems and telecommunication equipment, operational logistics, identification of evacuation routes and temporary shelters. Lessons learnt from this operation will be taken into consideration in future emergencies.

Overall, the objectives within this DREF operation were completed and the ongoing cooperation with Movement partners (such as SNPAD and the ICRC) in Colombia has contributed to effective coordination during the response operation. No serious challenges were encountered within the objectives, besides the lack of accessibility of the affected areas.

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

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact

vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".	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

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRCO005 - Colombia Volcano Nevado del Huila

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/12-2009/12
Budget Timeframe	2008/12-2009/03
Appeal	MDRCO005
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	**150,000**					**150,000**
B. Opening Balance	**0**					**0**
Income						
Other Income						
Voluntary Income	*149,994*					*149,994*
C5. Other Income	***149,994***					***149,994***
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	**149,994**					**149,994**
D. Total Funding = B +C	**149,994**					**149,994**
Appeal Coverage	**100%**					**100%**

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	149,994					**149,994**
E. Expenditure	-149,994					**-149,994**
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					**0**

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Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/12-2009/12
Budget Timeframe	2008/12-2009/03
Appeal	MDRCO005
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure						Variance
		Goal 1: Disaster Management	Goal 2: Health and Care	Goal 3: Capacity Building	Goal 4: Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL	
	A						B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		**150,000**					**150,000**	
Supplies								
Construction Materials	8,676							**8,676**
Food	29,700	24,733					**24,733**	**4,967**
Water & Sanitation	10,883	6,607					**6,607**	**4,276**
Utensils & Tools	15,973	24,683					**24,683**	**-8,710**
Other Supplies & Services	29,700	26,191					**26,191**	**3,509**
Total Supplies	**94,932**	**82,214**					**82,214**	**12,718**
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Vehicles	13,320	7,780					**7,780**	**5,540**
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	**13,320**	**7,780**					**7,780**	**5,540**
Transport & Storage								
Distribution & Monitoring	5,500							**5,500**
Transport & Vehicle Costs	4,000	3,074					**3,074**	**926**
Total Transport & Storage	**9,500**	**3,074**					**3,074**	**6,426**
Personnel								
National Society Staff	4,100	15,250					**15,250**	**-11,150**
Total Personnel	**4,100**	**15,250**					**15,250**	**-11,150**
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	14,704	9,344					**9,344**	**5,360**
Total Workshops & Training	**14,704**	**9,344**					**9,344**	**5,360**
General Expenditure								
Travel	1,100	796					**796**	**305**
Office Costs	1,019	1,876					**1,876**	**-857**
Communications	1,200	1,618					**1,618**	**-418**
Financial Charges	375	18,265					**18,265**	**-17,890**
Other General Expenses		27					**27**	**-27**
Total General Expenditure	**3,694**	**22,583**					**22,583**	**-18,889**
Programme Support								
Program Support	9,750	9,750					**9,750**	**0**
Total Programme Support	**9,750**	**9,750**					**9,750**	**0**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	**150,000**	**149,994**					**149,994**	**7**
VARIANCE (C - D)		**7**					**7**	