

# DREF operation final report



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Paraguay: Drought

DREF Operation n° MDRPY005  
GLIDE DR-2008-000157-PRY  
12 May 2009

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 93,000 (USD 84,545 or EUR 57,585)** was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Paraguayan Red Cross in delivering immediate food assistance to 1,261 indigenous families in the department of Boquerón.

With the aim of reducing the impact caused by this natural phenomenon which requires the implementation of urgent measures and programmes to reduce the vulnerability of the population and of the indigenous communities, the National Government, by Decree of the Executive Authority N° 229 of 10 September 2008, declared an Emergency Situation for a period of 90 days for the departments of Alto Paraguay, Boquerón and Presidente Hayes that were affected by a prolonged drought.

The National Emergency Secretariat (Secretaría de Emergencia Nacional - SEN) elaborated a plan of action to respond to this situation, entitling this "El Chaco needs us" (El Chaco nos necesita), with the express purpose of working in coordination with public and private institutions and the international community along six strategic lines.

The Paraguayan Red Cross (PRC) deployed an assessment team for one week to the department of Boquerón. The team worked jointly with government officials from the department of Boquerón and with local government branches in the municipalities of Filadelfia and Mariscal Estigarribia, carrying out damage and need assessments as well as identification of families affected by the drought. The International Federation, through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for the Andean Region, provided support to the PRC from the outset of the emergency. A Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member specialized in water and sanitation was deployed to Paraguay for one month to provide technical support for the operation. The Agency for International Development of the United States government (USAID) channelled emergency funds for assisting families in the Department of Boquerón. Other organizations including the Inter-American



Beneficiaries receiving complementary food parcels.  
Source: Paraguayan Red Cross

Development Bank (IADB) and the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) provided funds to rehabilitate water systems. Additionally, the Italian government replenished DREF in the amount of CHF 80,750.

[<Click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)

## The situation

The Central Region of Chaco covers 60 per cent of the country and includes the departments of Alto Paraguay, Boquerón and Presidente Hayes. The region of Chaco has significant climatic variations and unique geological characteristics that create a great variety of ecological phenomena including plains, dry savannas—that seasonally flood—, swamplands and extensive forests and brush land. One of the major problems this area faces is the extreme cyclical droughts and flooding. According to the Nature Conservancy, the river water levels in the mountain range area during the rainy season reach very high peaks and diminish dramatically during the dry season. The sustainability of agriculture is severely impacted by these drastic changes as the soil becomes highly impermeable causing floods during the rainy season while during dry season the soil becomes sandy with poor nutrients.

Additionally, the local population comprises mainly small-scale farmers and indigenous communities which face severe socio-economic challenges such as poverty, low wages, chronic malnutrition and low food supply, compounded by environmental concerns such as deforestation, general degradation of soil productivity and scarcity of water. The territorial and socio-economic framework of the region indicates that most of these impacts are frequently under-reported or they do not receive visibility at the international level, a phenomenon regularly known as “silent disasters”.

Notably, more than 60 per cent of the population is living below the poverty line and the most vulnerable are the indigenous communities that do not have enough land to cultivate and generate the income to afford basic necessities. The prolonged drought has deteriorated the population's basic subsistence as communities have temporarily lost the ability to produce their own food and secure their own water supply.

According to SEN, health reports indicate high levels of respiratory and flu-like symptoms due to the drastic weather changes and the presence of constant strong winds coming in from the north. In addition, undernourishment due to the low food supply has caused the death of six children and low school performance.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the beginning of the emergency, the Paraguayan Red Cross activated its local and central response teams. A National Intervention Team (NIT) was deployed along with a volunteer trained as a RIT member specialized in information and reporting to support the local PRC branch in Boquerón. The team was jointly coordinating the gathering of information with the local authorities of Boquerón and sub-authorities of Filadelfia, Loma Plata and Mcal. Estigarribia. A plan of action was drawn up in coordination with the Pan American Disaster Response Unit in Panama. In addition, a water and sanitation specialist was deployed for one month with the objective of completing an exhaustive and complete diagnosis of the potable water supply systems in the department of Boquerón.

The local branches have worked actively since the beginning of the year in risk management processes at departmental level through a Preparedness and Multi-Hazard Risk Reduction Project financed by ECHO (DIPECHO-V). The branches activated all processes with actors involved as established within the framework of the project.

The PRC mobilized technical personnel, disaster response specialists with expertise in logistics, purchasing, health and administration. The Paraguayan Red Cross also utilized the PRC volunteer work in the intervention and worked in close coordination with SEN.

The support provided by the local branches and team members from the department of Boquerón in guiding and directing the actions has been invaluable. Risk management processes have been enhanced and coordinated response actions with the Emergency Operations Centre located in Cruce Los Pioneros, Chaco were made possible thanks to their efforts.

The Paraguayan government supported PRC activities by providing fuel in order to access some communities. Since the beginning of the emergency the government has been assisting the National Society with resources including a vehicle and personnel to carry out the distribution activities.

## Progress towards objectives

### Relief distributions (food items)

**Objective: To assist 900 of the most vulnerable families in the departments of Boquerón with humanitarian aid consisting of supplementary food items.**

#### Activities completed:

- Revision of community list.
- List update after field visits (visits to each potential beneficiary family).
- Preparation of distribution tables.
- Local procurement of food items.
- Packaging and labelling of food parcels.
- Elaboration and updating census with government listings.
- Organization of volunteer groups.
- Organization with community leaders to notify distributions.
- Mobilization and delivery of food parcels to each family (with signature of each head of family).

The criteria for selection of the beneficiary families focused on indigenous families affected by the drought in the department of Boquerón. Mobilization and delivery of food parcels to each family (with signature of each head of family and or community leader representative), are carried out according to distribution charts made after a census was completed in the beneficiary communities. Communities received food parcels after presenting proper identification. Due to the drought season the indigenous communities were affected with lack of water. As a result family's food intake was reduced from three daily meals to one meal a day; therefore affecting their health. During the last phase, there was a noticeable improvement in the quality of life of the affected people thanks to the food items distributed, which followed Sphere standards (increasing nutritional conditions). Consequently, health conditions improved, especially among children and the elderly who are the most vulnerable.

#### Impact:

The plan of action initially contemplated distribution of a 47 kg. food parcel to 900 families in the indigenous communities of the department of Boquerón for a period of one month.

An agreement was reached with the SEN, where the SEN would provide transportation (trucks), drivers and gasoline to support the distribution activities. Thanks to this agreement, resources were optimized and an additional 361 families benefitted from the food distributions.

The food parcels distributed were labelled "complementary rations" as per Sphere Project standards. The following table details the amount of kilocalories and items:

Food Item	Requirements Per person/day (kilocalories)	Energy (calories/grs.)	Energy (person/day)	Requirement per family (6 persons per day)	Quantity per month (30 days)
Rice	55	3.6	198	330	10
Flour	30	3.5	105	180	5
Noodles	30	3.5	105	180	5
Sugar	25	4	100	150	5
Beans	55	3.4	187	330	10
Salt	12	0	0	72	2
Tea		0	0	-	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>42</b>

The following table shows the number of families and quantities in Kgs. distributed:

Areas	Nº	Communities	Nº of families	Nº of people	Quantity Kgs.
	1	Samaria	59	354	2,773
	2	Cesarea	34	204	1,598
	3	La Abundancia	88	528	4,136
	4	Jericó	65	390	3,055
	5	Betania	142	852	6,674
	6	Campo Nuevo	54	324	2,538
	7	Campo Salado	28	168	1,316
Pedro P. Peña	8	San Agustín Guaraní	65	390	3,055
	9	Cristo Rey	18	108	846
	10	La Laguna	28	168	1,316
	11	Maria Auxiliadora	16	96	752
	12	La Represa - La Esperanza	7	42	329
	13	Mayor Gardel	4	24	188
	14	La Dorada	26	156	1,222
	15	El Pelicano	13	78	611
	16	La Leona	2	12	94
	17	Represa Norte	5	30	235
	18	San Agustín Nivaculé	38	228	1,786
	19	San Agustín Manhuí	28	168	1,316
	20	La represa sur	21	126	987
	21	Pozo Hondo	33	198	1,551
Southern area	22	Fischat San Leonardo	245	1,470	11,515
	23	Mistolar	46	276	2,162
	24	San José Esteros	125	750	5,875
Northern area	25	Pablo Stahl	25	150	1,175
	26	La Esquina	26	156	1,222
	27	Garay	20	120	940
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,261</b>	<b>7,566</b>	<b>59,267</b>

A total of 1,261 families (7,566 people) received 59,267 kgs. of food items in 27 communities in the area of Yalve Sanga in the municipality of Loma Plata.

### Challenges:

The PRC coordinated with the SEN the delivery of the food parcels from the capital city of Asuncion to the affected communities. The main challenge identified was the long distance from Asuncion to the communities and the poor road conditions.

### Water and Sanitation

**Objective:** The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced through the provision of safe water.

#### Activities completed:

- Visit to the affected municipalities.
- Coordinate between the PADRU water and sanitation expert and PRC technicians.
- Complete a thorough damage assessment in 94 communities.
- Elaborate a report on assessments gathered in the field.
- Deliver a status report to the communities about the repaired water systems.
- Seek funding to implement proposed course of action.

#### Impact:

The government of Boquerón provided water in some communities and repaired some of the damaged water systems. Additionally, the municipality of Filadelfia repaired the damaged water systems in the communities.

The PRC prepared an analysis and elaborated a plan of action (PoA) to rehabilitate the water systems in the department of Boquerón. The RIT member specialized in water and sanitation conducted assessments and elaborated a proposal, which was eventually funded by the Inter-American Development Bank. The objective is to rehabilitate water systems in eight communities, provide training for maintenance of the water systems and distribute a maintenance kit to each community.

The following table describes the type of rehabilitation accomplished from December 2008 to February 2009 by the Paraguayan Red Cross with funds provided by IADB:

Department	Municipality	Community	Beneficiaries		Type of Rehabilitation accomplished
			N° of Families	N° of People	
BOQUERON	FILADELFIA	La Esquina (Ayoreo) – Southern Zone	27	250	The collected rain water system is rehabilitated (construction of a 100m2 roof and installation of 40,000 litre tanks), 2,000 litre water system collection tanks for homes; water treatment.
		Garay (Ayoreo) – Southern Zone	20	200	The collected rain water system is rehabilitated (construction of a 100m2 roof and installation of 40,000 litre tanks), 2,000 litres water system collection tanks for homes; water treatment: Installation of pipes and windmill.
	LOMA PLATA	Betania (Lengua) – Yalve Sanga	143	1,000	Repairing of gutters for collection of water, widening of community pipes and water treatment.
		Jope (Lengua) – Yalve Sanga	74	600	Repairing of gutters for collection of water, widening of community pipes and water treatment.
		13 de Agosto (Nivacle) – Laguna Negra	25	200	Supply of windmill, widening of community pipes. Water treatment.
		Nasuc (Nivacle) – Campo Loa	57	450	Supply of windmill. Water treatment.
		Belen (Nivacle) – Laguna Negra	96	700	Repairing of water collection systems, provision of tanks for homes. Water treatment.
		Primavera (Nivacle) – Campo Loa	28	200	Repairing of cisterns, supply of a water pump, and water treatment.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2 (municipalities)</b>	<b>8 (communities)</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>3,600</b>	

The PRC in coordination with SEN strengthened the departmental governments of Boqueron and Presidente Hayes by providing them with water and sanitation equipment and supplies. The RIT deployed at the beginning of the emergency will stay for five months (until May 2009) to support and coordinate the activities with the PRC and SEN. This activity was funded by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO).

## Conclusion

This operation strengthened relations among local authorities of Filadelfia, Mcal. Estigarribia, and the government of the department of Boquerón. The local authorities of Boquerón requested constant support from the local PRC branch as well as the PRC headquarters for the strengthening of disaster response, risk management and risk reduction. In addition, the SEN accomplished successful coordination efforts for the distribution of the food parcels and logistical support. The strategic use of DREF funds in this operation led to

additional funding opportunities and longer-term programming, including the rehabilitation of water supply systems and supply of equipment through third party funding.

Following this emergency, the communities and National Society are more aware of how to confront disaster situations and have learned the importance of increased preparedness in order to reduce risks. Moreover, the government of Boquerón is in the process of elaborating an institutional strengthening initiative in the area of risk reduction focusing on the Niño phenomena, which will increase awareness among the communities.

In addition, the DIPECHO - Finnish Red Cross – International Federation Risk Reduction Project in the region of Chaco has been crucial to increase the visibility and credibility of the Paraguayan Red Cross within the involved communities, especially since the communities were provided with food items.

## 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**

MDRPY005 - Paraguay - Drought

Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/09-2009/03
Budget Timeframe	2008/09-2008/12
Appeal	MDRPY005
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
<b>A. Budget</b>	<b>93,000</b>					<b>93,000</b>
<b>B. Opening Balance</b>	<b>0</b>					<b>0</b>
<b>Income</b>						
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Voluntary Income</i>	<i>89,214</i>					<i>89,214</i>
<b>C5. Other Income</b>	<b>89,214</b>					<b>89,214</b>
<b>C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)</b>	<b>89,214</b>					<b>89,214</b>
<b>D. Total Funding = B + C</b>	<b>89,214</b>					<b>89,214</b>
<b>Appeal Coverage</b>	<b>96%</b>					<b>96%</b>

**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>B. Opening Balance</b>	<b>0</b>					<b>0</b>
<b>C. Income</b>	<b>89,214</b>					<b>89,214</b>
<b>E. Expenditure</b>	<b>-89,214</b>					<b>-89,214</b>
<b>F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)</b>	<b>0</b>					<b>0</b>

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Final Financial Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2008/09-2009/03
Budget Timeframe	2008/09-2008/12
Appeal	MDRPY005
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### 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
<b>BUDGET (C)</b>		<b>93,000</b>					<b>93,000</b>	
<b>Supplies</b>								
Food	67,995	76,432					76,432	-8,437
<b>Total Supplies</b>	<b>67,995</b>	<b>76,432</b>					<b>76,432</b>	<b>-8,437</b>
<b>Transport &amp; Storage</b>								
Distribution & Monitoring		379					379	-379
Transport & Vehicle Costs	7,000	2,872					2,872	4,128
<b>Total Transport &amp; Storage</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>3,251</b>					<b>3,251</b>	<b>3,749</b>
<b>Personnel</b>								
Regionally Deployed Staff	3,300	5,855					5,855	-2,555
National Society Staff	2,660	3,446					3,446	-786
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>5,960</b>	<b>9,302</b>					<b>9,302</b>	<b>-3,342</b>
<b>General Expenditure</b>								
Travel	2,500	5,657					5,657	-3,157
Information & Public Relation	1,500	2,216					2,216	-716
Office Costs	500	871					871	-371
Communications	1,000	151					151	849
Financial Charges	500	-14,465					-14,465	14,965
<b>Total General Expenditure</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>-5,570</b>					<b>-5,570</b>	<b>11,570</b>
<b>Programme Support</b>								
Program Support	6,045	5,799					5,799	246
<b>Total Programme Support</b>	<b>6,045</b>	<b>5,799</b>					<b>5,799</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>89,214</b>					<b>89,214</b>	<b>3,786</b>
<b>VARIANCE (C - D)</b>		<b>3,786</b>					<b>3,786</b>	