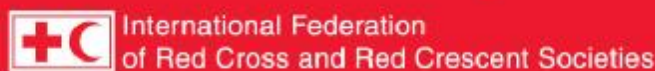


DREF operation final report



Costa Rica: Earthquake

DREF operation n° MDRCR005
GLIDE n° EQ-2009-000009-CRI
29 October 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 115,000 (USD 100,762 or EUR 76,143) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 13 January 2009 to support the Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) in delivering immediate assistance to 500 families (approximately 2,500 people) affected by the earthquake.

This DREF final report highlights the activities accomplished by the CRRC. The DREF funds initially allowed the National Society to perform search, rescue and evacuation activities, and to provide emergency first aid and psychosocial support (PSP) to the most affected. A DREF extension of CHF 65,000 was allocated in order for the CRRC to implement, in coordination with the Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), a cash transfer programme for 100 families. Additionally, 500 hygiene and kitchen kits were distributed amongst the most vulnerable in the affected area of Heredia.



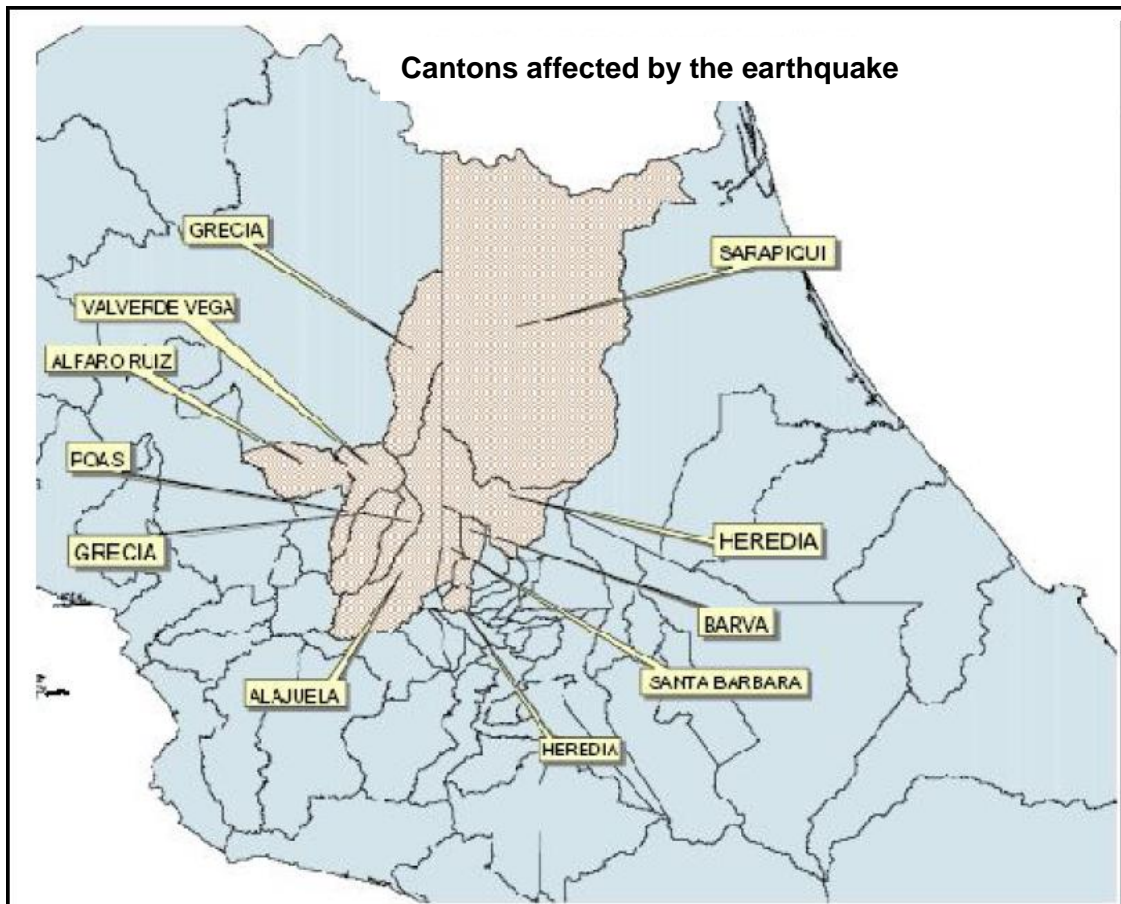
Costa Rican Red Cross volunteers preparing food parcels for the affected people. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

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

The situation

On 8 January 2009, an earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale hit Costa Rica in the region of Vara Blanca-Cariblanco, 6 km east of the Póas Volcano and approximately 35 km from the capital city of San José. The earthquake affected the provinces of Alajuela, Heredia, San José and Cartago in the Central Valley, with greatest damage in the cantons of Alajuela and Poás in the province of Alajuela, and Barva, Santa Barbara and Heredia in the province of Heredia. The main earthquake was followed by approximately 800 aftershocks measuring from 3.0° to 4.5° on the Richter scale over the next 24 hours and approximately 700 more in the two-week period thereafter. Continued aftershocks and persistent rainfall have exacerbated the gravity of landslides and mudflows in the affected areas. Major and minor roads, previously blocked with

dirt and debris from the earthquake, have been cleared now. The map below shows the cantons affected by the earthquake:



By 19 January, with rehabilitation activities underway the National Emergency Committee (Comisión Nacional de Emergencias – CNE) ended the search and rescue activities whilst maintaining several municipalities in Alajuela and Heredia province on red alert. Eleven days into the operation, the repeated aftershocks and multiple landslides created unstable conditions threatening the safety of rescue workers searching for missing people in areas requiring extensive excavation.

The earthquake caused the death of 23 people and injured 100. Approximately 2,788 people were directly affected by the earthquake and 125,584 people were affected indirectly, in part due to losses in the agricultural and tourism sectors as well as through disruptions in basic utility services. There were 2,266 people evacuated from the affected areas to 22 temporary shelters, including schools, churches and community centres.

Final assessments by the CNE, the Ministry of Housing and the Institute of Social Welfare indicated that 1,087 houses were affected, of which 423 were totally destroyed and 664 were partially damaged. The Ministry of Housing and the Institute for Social Welfare implemented plans to find longer-term solutions for families whose homes were destroyed and/or whose properties or communities are in seismically unstable locations. A few hundred people still remain in shelters and are gradually transitioning to temporary and permanent housing solutions. Current proposals indicate that 200 families would be transferred to temporary wooden homes to be built by *Un Techo para Mi País* (A Roof for my Country) in four transition shelter sites until a permanent housing solution is provided within an estimated period of three to six months. The Costa Rican government will provide grants to assist some 500 families to repair or reconstruct homes as part of a wider recovery effort. The government will also support local private organizations that have committed to purchase a plot of land to rebuild homes for 100 of the most vulnerable families.

No major damages were reported in the health infrastructure. However, the CNE reported that 46 major and minor roads, 13 bridges and 20 water systems suffered significant damages as a result of the earthquake and the subsequent landslides and mudflows. Assessments from the Costa Rican Institute for Water and Sewerage Systems (Instituto Costarricense de Acueductos y Alcantarillados – ICAA) informed that 45,000 people were initially left without access to water. Following the earthquake, the electricity



The Regional Intervention Team member talks with a beneficiary during the cash transfer programme carried out in the northern region of Costa Rica. Source: International Federation

services were also interrupted. The main damages in this sector were in the communities of Montaña Azul, Vara Blanca, Los Cartagos and Poasito.

Damage to the local economy was significant. The Ministry of Agriculture reported that a total of 1,250 hectares of crops were affected, with considerable losses to the local dairy industry and to flower, strawberry and coffee plantations. Affected families' income was reduced due to a decrease in tourist activities as a result of continued road closures and damages in the region surrounding the Póas Volcano National Park.

The government estimates the emergency caused a loss of approximately of USD 100 million. The Costa Rican National

Emergency Fund received generous donations from the Chinese, Spanish and United States governments and from international multilateral institutions including the World Bank, standing at USD 650,000. Additional support was received from the governments of Colombia and the United States which provided rescue equipment and personnel, including the donation of three helicopters to support aerial evacuations.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the onset of the emergency the Costa Rican Red Cross worked arduously in providing first aid to the injured and carrying out search and rescue activities. The National Society provided support to the CNE in the management and administration of the emergency shelters set up to house the families in the affected areas. Volunteers provided psychosocial support to affected families in temporary shelters and distributed emergency relief items. Also, CRRC volunteers provided medical attention to the injured people in the temporary shelters and transferred patients to hospitals. In addition, the CRRC opened centres to receive and gather food and non-food items donated by the Costa Rican public.

The following table shows the number of CRRC volunteers, workers and resources used during the first days of the emergency:

Relief workers	535
Youth volunteers	185
Logistics	40
Ambulatory support	6
Basic ambulances	23
Rescue units	4
Response vehicles	10
Trucks	9

With support from the International Federation's Pan-American Disaster Response Unit and the American Red Cross, the Costa Rican Red Cross designed and implemented a cash transfer programme targeting 100 families to repair their damaged homes.

In addition to the RIT member specialized in cash voucher programmes from the Brazilian Red Cross, the American Red Cross also mobilized a regional operations delegate to the field to assess needs as well as to identify and implement early recovery interventions and CRRC capacity-building programmes. Another RIT member specializing in reporting was deployed to the area to provide information and ensure progress reports on the operation for PADRU.

The American Red Cross contributed with a bilateral donation of USD 30,000 to complement the cash voucher programme allowing the CRRC to increase the amount of beneficiaries to 128 as well as increase the value of the cash vouchers.

The German Red Cross contributed with a donation of EUR 55,000 from the German government to the CRRC for the repair of three water systems, and the purchase of construction materials and agricultural reactivation kits to assist 100 families.

At the onset of the emergency, the CRRC published 12 reports on the Federation's Disaster Management Information System website, and disseminated 12 situation reports to national and international partners, in order to provide constant updates on the situation. Over 300 interviews were conducted on local and national media. Also, four articles were published on the CRRC's website (www.cruzroja.or.cr/).

Progress towards objectives

This DREF operation identified 500 (2,500 beneficiaries) of the most affected families after preliminary assessments were complete. The National Society provided immediate assistance in the distribution of emergency relief (basic non-food items), and the design and implementation of a cash transfer programme to facilitate purchase by the families of tools and materials necessary to repair damaged homes. This DREF allocation also covered service fees for shipment of kits, mobilization cost and per diem for volunteers and the mobilization of the RIT from the Brazilian Red Cross who supported the operation.

Health in emergencies

Objective: The Costa Rican Red Cross will complete vital response activities (search and rescue evacuations and damage and needs assessments) and will provide care to shelters.

Activities completed:

- Mobilization of CRRC volunteers and staff to affected areas.
- Field monitoring of earthquake-affected areas, especially in Vara Blanca and San Miguel.
- Conduct rapid damage and needs assessments.
- Conduct search and rescue evacuations.
- Provide pre-hospital care to injured people.
- Verification and surveys of the most affected populations.
- Maintain coordination and communications between headquarters and field Red Cross staff and public institutions.

Results:

National Intervention Team (NIT) members and local staff were deployed to the field, supported by 400 national and regional volunteers working in the initial emergency response. The CRRC sent over 40 vehicles, including rescue vehicles, ambulances, 4-wheel drive pick-up trucks and one all-terrain vehicle (Unimog) to the affected areas to support the operation.

In coordination with the CNE and other governmental agencies responding to the emergency, the CRRC carried out damage and needs assessments led by staff from the National Society's headquarters and supported by NIT members. Information collected from CNE was processed in the capital city of San José. Processed information was then shared amongst the different actors involved in the emergency response and used in on-going detailed assessments by the national authorities.

A total of 512 people were evacuated by land and air with the CRRC search and rescue teams working in coordination with the CNE and other actors. A centre to receive injured people was set up at the Tobias Bolaños airport, receiving 43 patients requiring medical assistance.

Teams of volunteers from the youth division organized recreational activities for children located in six temporary shelters (Poasito, Laguna de Fraijanes, Río Cuarto, El Roble and the Dulce Nombre School and Community Centre), reaching a total of 500 children in coordination with UNICEF under the “Return to Happiness” (Retorno a la Alegría) programme which assists children in managing stress related to the shock of the earthquake and displacement to temporary shelters.

Challenges:

Initial challenges in the emergency response operation were encountered in the extreme conditions in the field which complicated access to isolated families and communities. These conditions in the field also resulted in a difficult situation for those involved in the clearing of access routes and the repair of vital infrastructure.

Relief distributions (basic non-food items)

Objective: 500 families (2,500 people) will benefit from the distribution of relief items to recover from the effects of the earthquake.

Activities completed:

- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reports on relief distributions.
- Develop an exit strategy.

Results:

On 11 January, 500 hygiene kits and 500 kitchen kits were dispatched by the International Federation’s Regional Logistics Unit to Costa Rica. The kits were distributed to the most vulnerable families, especially those who lost their homes and their personal belongings (see tables below). The beneficiary criteria were defined jointly by an American Red Cross delegate, the RIT member and a PADRU disaster management delegate.

Kitchen kit (Family of 5 people)

Item	Quantity
Bowl (1L, aluminium)	5
Frying pan (2.5L)	5
Kitchen knife (stainless steel blade 15cm, plastic handle)	1
Table knife (stainless steel)	1
Wooden spoon (30cm)	5
Soup spoon (stainless steel, 15 ml)	1
Cooking pot (5L, alum. diam 20 cm, with handles and lid)	5
Cooking pot (7L, alum. diam 24 cm, with handles)	1
Cup (stainless steel, 300ml)	1
Plate (aluminium, diam. 22 cm)	5
Table fork (stainless steel)	5

Hygiene kits (for 5 people for 1 month)

Item	Quantity
Washing powder (1 kg)	3
Toilet paper (roll)	12
Body soap (100g bar)	5
Tooth paste (75 ml tube)	5

Tooth brush	5
Shampoo (250 ml)	2
Disposable razor	5
Hygienic pads	8

The kits were distributed in the communities of San Pedro de Poás and San Miguel de Sarapiquí, both located along the flanks of the Poás Volcano (see table below): not clear re San Rafael de Vara Blanca, Vara Blanca if they are somehow part of the other communities.

Item	Communities				Total
	San Pedro de Poás	San Rafael de Vara Blanca	Vara Blanca	San Miguel de Sarapiquí	
Kitchen kit	160	43	180	117	500
Hygiene kit	157	43	176	124	500

Challenges:

There were no challenges identified within this objective.

National Society Capacity-Building

Objective: The capacity of the Costa Rican Red Cross in disaster response and preparedness will have been strengthened.

Activities completed:

- Deployment of a RIT specialized in reporting to support the CRRC.

Results:

A RIT member specialized in reporting was mobilized to San José from 19 to 25 January 2009 to support the CRRC in the collection of information on the national response to the earthquake, as well as to support reporting functions on the emergency response operations underway for Tropical Storm Alma (Appeal MDR43003). Information was gathered through a series of interviews with staff members from the Emergency Operations Centre and the National Relief Directorate, as well as field visits to meet volunteers and beneficiaries from the affected communities of Alajuela, Vara Blanca, San Rafael, Poasito, San Miguel, Cariblanco, La Virgen and Puerto Viejo in Sarapiquí.

A short workshop on reporting functions in emergency situations was carried out for the National Relief Directorate staff including those responsible for the collection and dissemination of information in the Emergency Operations Centre, as well as staff from the national Communications and Press Department. The RIT member also reviewed existing reporting processes within the National Society and provided recommendations to improve the internal and external flow of information in emergency response and recovery operations.

Challenges:

The CRRC is recognized as one of the country's key actors in emergency response. This is due not only to actions in the field but also in part thanks to effective communications strategies which ensure that the work of the institution is disseminated as widely as possible. Given the numerous emergencies that the institution has responded to over a relatively short period, the National Society faces some challenges in the collection and dissemination of information, in particular after the initial immediate emergency phase.

Permanent shelter

Objective: 100 families (500 people) will benefit from the transfer of funds to purchase tools and materials to repair homes damaged during the earthquake.

Activities completed:

- Deployment of two RIT experienced and trained in the design and implementation of cash voucher programmes.
- Conduct damage and needs assessments in the affected communities along with a study of the capacity of the marketplace to absorb a cash voucher for shelter early recovery programme.
- Analyse local market conditions, create vouchers and establish agreements with merchants.

- Coordinate activities with relevant partner agencies.
- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and programme eligibility criteria.
- Conduct training of Red Cross personnel who will participate in the programme and complete field interviews with affected families.
- Coordinate with engineers/geologists on repair feasibility issues.
- Beneficiary selection and programme transparency.
- Distribution of vouchers and programme description letter to beneficiaries.
- Payment to merchants.
- Monitoring and programme evaluation.

Results:

A RIT member from the American Red Cross was mobilized to San José on 25 January to support the CRRC in the design of a cash transfer programme. Damage, needs and market assessments were conducted and government supported recovery programmes were evaluated. Subsequently, a cash transfer programme for construction and repair materials was designed and eligibility criteria, beneficiary questionnaires, cash vouchers and other programme documentation were developed. Once the RIT from the American Red Cross completed the design of the programme, another RIT from the Brazilian Red Cross came to the field to support the implementation of activities.

The programme included the exchange of purchase orders with construction providers for the restoration of homes. Other activities included performing census, contacting suppliers and defining the target communities. The communities selected were Colonia Socorro, Colonia Carvajal, Cariblanco, Los Angeles and San Miguel in the sector of San Miguel de Sarapiquí and Barrio Don Jesús, San Juan Sur, San Pedro, Sabana Redonda, Calle el Tigre and Calle el Tajo en the sector of San Pedro Poas. According to the assessments from the National Society, these communities did not receive any assistance from the government or any other agency. Once agreements were made with suppliers through the CRRC procurement department, the selection of families was completed.

The following table shows the number of families who received vouchers per neighbourhood and sector:

Sector	Neighbourhood	Number of Families
Poás	Barriada Santa Cecilia	1
	Barrio Jesús	7
	Cabuyal	1
	Calle El Tajo	6
	Calle El Tigre	13
	Calle Lajas	1
	Calle Liles	5
	Calle San José	1
	Calle Santa Bárbara	1
	Los Fresales	1
	Churuca	3
	Cruce Cabuyal	1
	Fraijanes	6
	Guatuza	2
	INVU	11
	La Pradera	1
	Los Ángeles	1
	Mastate	2
	Poasito	2
	Sabana Redonda	3
San Juan	4	
San Rafael Centro	3	
Casa Redonda	1	
San Miguel	Cariblanco	18
	Colonia Carvajal	5
	Corazón de Jesús	1
	La Isla	2
	María Aguilar	1
Pata Gallo	2	

	San Miguel	19
	Ujarras	3
Total Number of benefitted families		128

The cash voucher programme allowed 128 families (28 additional families were reached thanks to the financial support of the American Red Cross) to receive purchase orders in exchange for construction supplies. With the supplies, families can start rehabilitating their homes and start re-building their lives.

Challenges:

The National Society found difficulties in finalizing the beneficiary lists since numerous assessment visits had to be made in order to complete the final list. Additionally, there was a shortage of suppliers (hardware stores) with sufficient inventories to offer credit near the communities. This posed a challenge as beneficiaries had to travel longer distances to retrieve the construction materials.

Conclusion

The CRRC has responded to multiple emergencies that have affected the country over the last nine months. CRRC staff and volunteers have been working at maximum capacity from its national headquarters, as well as its regional and local branches nationwide.

Besides having recently completed emergency response operations to the earthquake, the CRRC also responded to floods caused by tropical storms during the month of September 2008 in the Chorotega region, and to severe floods that devastated the provinces of Limón, Cartago, Heredia and San José in November 2008, as well as the northern provinces of Panama. Also, the CRRC responded to the needs caused by the overflow of several rivers in the Huetar and Heredia regions that occurred during the first week of February 2009. These successive response operations to major disasters have severely stretched CRRC's resources. DREF funding was allocated to assist the CRRC relief effort in the earlier floods experienced on November 2008 with an Emergency Appeal to mobilize support for affected families in Costa Rica and Panama.

During this operation, the CRRC successfully accomplished all the objectives in the plan of action. The cash voucher programme was designed and implemented reaching in total 128 families whose houses were damaged thanks to the additional bilateral contribution from the American Red Cross (from an initial target of 100 families). Additionally, 500 families received hygiene and kitchen kits that were dispatched by the Regional Logistics Unit in Panama. The people that lost all their belongings benefited through the receipt of relief items which enabled them to jump start their daily activities. Furthermore, it was the first time in the Americas that a DREF fund programme was designed and implemented jointly by the Costa Rican Red Cross, the International Federation and the American Red Cross. This facilitated synergy, coherence and sharing of experiences.

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

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRCR005 - Costa Rica - Earthquake

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/01-2009/10
Budget Timeframe	2009/01-2009/04
Appeal	MDRCR005
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	115,000					115,000
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Other Income</u>						
Voluntary Income	101,995					101,995
C5. Other Income	101,995					101,995
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C5)	101,995					101,995
D. Total Funding = B + C	101,995					101,995
Appeal Coverage	89%					89%

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	101,995					101,995
E. Expenditure	-101,995					-101,995
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	0					0

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRCR005 - Costa Rica - Earthquake

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2009/01-2009/10
Budget Timeframe	2009/01-2009/04
Appeal	MDRCR005
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	
BUDGET (C)		115,000					115,000	
Supplies								
Utensils & Tools	17,500	13,978					13,978	3,522
Other Supplies & Services	37,000	36,811					36,811	189
Total Supplies	54,500	50,790					50,790	3,710
Transport & Storage								
Storage	12,000	2,073					2,073	9,927
Distribution & Monitoring		1,228					1,228	-1,228
Transport & Vehicle Costs	20,000	9,848					9,848	10,152
Total Transport & Storage	32,000	13,150					13,150	18,850
Personnel								
Regionally Deployed Staff	6,000	5,121					5,121	879
National Staff	3,500							3,500
National Society Staff	3,100	9,723					9,723	-6,623
Total Personnel	12,600	14,844					14,844	-2,244
General Expenditure								
Travel	4,000	8,215					8,215	-4,215
Office Costs		2,048					2,048	-2,048
Communications	2,250	4,059					4,059	-1,809
Financial Charges	450	204					204	246
Total General Expenditure	6,700	14,526					14,526	-7,826
Programme Support								
Program Support	7,475	6,487					6,487	988
Total Programme Support	7,475	6,487					6,487	988
Services								
Services & Recoveries	1,725	2,198					2,198	-473
Total Services	1,725	2,198					2,198	-473
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	115,000	101,995					101,995	13,005
VARIANCE (C - D)		13,005					13,005	