

DREF operation update



Colombia: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRCO007
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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) 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 emergency response. 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.

Period covered by this update: 17 August to 17 September 2010.

62,288 Swiss Francs (64,807 US dollars or 50,428 euro) have been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Colombian Red Cross Society (CRCS) in delivering immediate assistance to some 2,500 beneficiaries (500 families) within its unified Plan of Action. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The worsening of the rainy season – aggravated by the phenomenon of “La Niña” – has caused flooding, affecting 739,816 people in the La Mojana zone of Colombia. The flooding destroyed and damaged roads, houses and crops. The DREF funding is assisting the CRCS

to cover a gap in an extensive on-going emergency response operation, enabling the CRCS to continue its emergency response efforts. Thus, funds have been allocated to support the purchase and distribution of food and non-food relief items and logistic support for the water and sanitation activities. The DREF operation also aims to increase community response capacity through the provision of awareness-raising brochures to families living in high-risk areas as well as equipment to the participating branches of the Colombian Red Cross Society in order to distribute relief items effectively.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 13 November 2010; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 13 February 2011).

The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on: <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

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Colombian Red Cross Society volunteers travelled to remote communities by boat to deliver relief aid to most vulnerable families affected by floods. Source: Colombian Red Cross Society

The situation

The rainy season has caused floods, mudslides and the collapse of dikes in Colombia. The rivers Cauca and San Jorge overflowed flooding 27 departments and 296 municipalities. Seventy four people died due to the floods. In addition, there has been extensive damage of houses, roads, and crops, in areas where the farming of rice, manioc, corn and plantain is the main source of income for the population.

The flooding as a result of La Niña started in June and Governmental institutions forecasted an increased impact of floods between the months of September and December. Although the rains decreased, the number of people affected by the disaster has grown dramatically according to CRCS figures:

Damage and People Affected	Data up to 17 August	Data up to 14 September
Departments	27	27
Municipalities	321	27
Capital of the country	1	1
Death toll	61	74
Injured	141	149
Missing people	10	19
People affected	521,889	739,816
Families affected	112,504	158,650
Homes destroyed	530	618
Homes damaged	81,646	132,135

As more rains are expected, the National Administration of the Colombian government has obtained funds of over 30,000 million Colombian pesos to develop a plan of action to assist vulnerable families in the country. This includes housing vouchers, food support, construction materials, training and rebuilding of infrastructure. The Risk Management Director estimates that 50 per cent of the affected families have been reached with assistance.

Coordination and partnerships

The CRCS is part of the National System for Disaster Prevention and Response (Sistema Nacional de Prevención y Atención de Desastres – SNPAD) that has activated the National Contingency Plan as well as local plans. The CRCS also coordinates with the following institutions in order to support the affected population: the Local and Regional Committees for Disaster Prevention and Response (CLOPAD), OXFAM GB, UNICEF (UNETE), WFP, ACF, Diócesis de Sincelejo, Umatas, Fedearroz, Corporación del Valle del Zinu, Corporación del Rio Magdalena, Public Service companies from the affected area, community-based promoters of water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, the CocaCola Co. and Acción Social.

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
<p>Outcome: 500 vulnerable families in the zone “La Mojana” are provided with food and non-food relief items.</p> <p>Activities planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments. • Distribute relief supplies (food parcels and hygiene kits) to 500 families. • Distribution of first aid and personal protection equipment among five local branches to complement distribution activities • Distribution of mosquito nets to 500 families of the Mojana zone. • Design and distribute brochures containing information about floods, mudslides • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions. • Develop an exit strategy.



A woman signs the distribution list after receiving relief items from the Colombian Red Cross Society. Photo: CRCS

Progress: In accordance with the DREF operation timeframe, the first month of the operation aimed to fulfil the different purchasing processes for relief support. Thus, food parcels, hygiene kits, mosquito nets and information brochures are being distributed to families. A total of 1,500 tarpaulins were sent by the Federation's Regional Logistics Unit. Equipment for the strengthening of branches has also been procured.

The list of target families is being crosschecked in coordination with the CLOPAD. While the needs for support are extensive, the operation is focusing on the most affected 500 families in the following departments: Bolívar (100 families), Sucre (100 families),

Magdalena (100 families), Córdoba (100 families) and Choco (200 families).

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: The emergency water needs of 500 vulnerable families in the zone "La Mojana" are covered.

Activities planned:

- Water and sanitation assessment
- Supply 2,500 people with drinking water following SPHERE standards.

Progress: The National Society has had to modify its initial strategy to cover the water needs of affected families. The increase in rainfall in the basins of the rivers Magdalena, Cauca and San Jorge has complicated the mobilization of a water treatment plant to targeted municipalities in Córdoba and Sucre. Therefore, the water plant of the CRCS-Sucre branch will supply clean water to the municipalities of Sucre and San Benito Abad (**Sucre** department). In **Córdoba**, the local CRCS branch and the CLOPAD determined that the basic water needs of the population will be met with the distribution of water bags as the deployment of a water purifying plant is too risky given the current weather conditions.

How we work

All IFRC 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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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