



DREF operation no. MDRGT007	Glide No. AC-2015-000084-GTM
Date of issue: 10 March 2016	GLIDE number: AC-2015-000084-GTM
Date of disaster: 6 June 2015	
Operation start date: 6 July 2015	Expected timeframe: 2 months
Host National Society: Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC)	Overall Operation budget: 16,858 Swiss francs (CHF)
Number of people affected: 12,017 people	Number of people assisted: 3,474 people (579 families) in 6 communities
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish Red Cross 	
Number of partner organizations actively involved in the operation: National Risk Reduction Coordinating Centre (CONRED), Sayaxché Petén Municipal Government Office, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare (MSPAS), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA), National Protected Areas Council (CONAP), Universidad of San Carlos in Guatemala, Guatemalan Army, Petén Governorate and the United Nations.	

[<Click here for the contact information. Click here for the final financial report>](#)

The Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) was partially replenished by the Directorate General European Commission's Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection department (DG ECHO). The major donors and partners of the DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United States of America, as well as DG ECHO, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) the Medtronic, Zurich and Coca Cola Foundations and other corporate and private donors. The international Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), on behalf of the Guatemalan Red Cross, would like to extend many thanks to DG ECHO for their generous contribution.

A. Situation Analysis

Description of the Disaster

The La Pasión River located in the municipality of Sayaxché in the department of Petén is part of Guatemala's protected areas. In June 2015, according to the National Risk Reduction Coordinating Centre (CONRED), oxidation ponds of an oil producer in the area overflowed due to heavy rain, contaminating the La Pasión River. The river is 345 km long 150 of which are affected by the contamination) and fed by many important sources which discharge significant amounts in this department.

According to official data, Sayaxché has approximately 76,482 inhabitants, of whom 87 per cent live in rural areas, 72 per cent belong to indigenous populations (mainly Q'eqchis) 76.3 per cent live in poverty, 29.4 per cent in extreme poverty and 34 per cent suffer from chronic and acute malnutrition (data recorded in the Governance Pact). The main economic activities are fishing, agriculture and agricultural work on palm plantations; thirty-six per cent of palm-cultivated land is in Sayaxché.

Many communities lack running and/or chlorinated or treated water for domestic consumption. Some communities have wells, but residents never know the level of purity of the water they extract. It is clear that many communities depend almost entirely on the La Pasión River and related streams. Communities south of Sayaxché report at least 3 instances in the last five years involving the contamination of streams, wells and hydrographical network that resulted from discharges of agro-chemicals from local industry.

Agriculture is the predominant activity in the region, with 51.09 per cent of the population engaging in it. In 2008, the main products were corn, beans, squash, rice, jalapeño peppers, *cobanero*, *zambo*, watermelon, peanut, and pineapple, but cultivation of African Palm has increased in recent years. According to the National Council for Protected Areas (CONAP), 16 per cent of the land in the municipality belongs to private palm enterprises. Livestock production accounts for 12.93 per cent of the municipality's economy. This involves the breeding and fattening of cattle; therefore, large tracts of land belonging to a few are used for this productive activity. Craft production accounts for 24.52 per cent of the municipality's economy, in which carpentry is especially strong; fishing, iron foundry, bakery, wood handicrafts, tailoring, candle-making and hammock production are additional livelihoods within the communities.

Results of the first water samples taken by the Toxicology Laboratory at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala were obtained on 10 June 2015, which indicated the presence of an organophosphorus pesticide (Malathion). This has caused the massive death of fish and other aquatic animal species in the ecosystem, and it is considered the most serious environmental problem of its kind in the national territory¹.

On 12 June 2015, the governor of Petén declared an orange alert for the entire department, and the mayor of Sayaxché declared a red alert on that same day. These are still in place in order to prioritize emergency assistance.

According to CONRED's 30 June report:

- 22 communities are affected
- 14,827 people are at risk
- 12,017 people are affected

It is important to mention that the investigation is stalled after four and a half months after the massive die-off of fish in the La Pasión River, which affected 185 km downstream from the source of the pollution and was classified by authorities as an ecocide. As a result of the stalled investigation, communities are alleging that authorities do not care about safeguarding their lives and that there is neither adequate information nor interest in resolving the problem.

The first and second United Nations (UN) Situation Reports were released on the third week in July (http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GT-Informe_Sit_Contaminacion_No_2.pdf). This study conducted by a UN inter-agency team, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS-NET) and environmental experts from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) confirmed the results of the assessment performed by the Guatemalan Red Cross and supplements the information with protection data.

It is important to highlight that **Malathion** is very toxic to aquatic organisms and dangerous to both the environment and human beings. However, given that there is no **Malathion** contamination in the La Pasión River to date, local authorities have decreased the alert level and emergency operations centre meetings to monitor this emergency to every fifteen days. Furthermore, decreasing the alert level will allow local authorities to initiate recovery actions.

Nevertheless, the Guatemalan Red Cross, with support from the Spanish Red Cross for CHF 45,140, began the exit process, which includes building cisterns in communities to collect rainwater, repairing water systems, cleaning wells, distributing water filters and intensifying hygiene promotion actions; these measures are contributing positively to communities affected by the contamination of the La Pasión river.

SUMMARY OF MEASURES TAKEN

Overview of Host National Society

The Guatemalan Red Cross initiated response actions in affected communities in Sayaxché as of 26 June and contributing members of the technical teams of both the Emergency Public Health Programme and the Community Health Programme, volunteers from five branches, equipment for setting up the simplified water system and vehicles and tools.

Operations were conducted from 26 June to 15 September 2015; during this time, the GRC, with support from the IFRC and Spanish Red Cross, has provided educational sessions on hygiene promotion 1,070 people and 472,034 litres of drinking water to 579 families. As of 11 August 2015, the operation was sufficiently financed, allowing for an increase in the number of beneficiary communities; furthermore, 15,000 litres of water per day were produced and stored, 10,000 litres of water were transported, 7 water distribution points were set up in 5 communities, 536 jerry cans were distributed and 816 people participated in hygiene promotion activities. The project allowed for the implementation of other actions such as the construction of water reservoirs, cleaning and disinfecting of wells, repairs to water systems and the construction of a community well. More detail in the operational plan section.

¹ CONRED, June 18, 2015; Report on the Ecological Disaster in Sayaxché/Petén

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The IFRC provided financial support to mobilize volunteers, travel expenses, lodgings, purchase of jerry cans, personal protective equipment, supplies, and enough accessories for a four-week operation. The Spanish Red Cross provided financial support to sustain the operation for eight additional weeks, including the exit strategy.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

There has been support from many government institutions, including the municipality of Sayaxché, the Guatemalan army, the National Council for Protected Areas and the Ministries of Health and Livestock, Agriculture, and Food.

A number of commitments were undertaken during meetings with various local authorities regarding the assistance to communities affected by the contamination of the La Pasi3n River. Below are some of the major agreements reached:

- Distribution of drinking water by the Guatemalan Red Cross to six communities: San Juan Acul, Canaan, la Felicidad, los Chorros, El Cedral, and El Ceibal.
- Placement of a water camp at the well by the municipality of Sayaxché.
- Safeguarding of the water production equipment by the Guatemalan army.
- Provision of water tanks by the Ministry of Health to transport water to affected communities.
- Provision of a Guatemalan army truck to transport water to communities.
- Provision of fuel by the municipality of Sayaxché to transport water.
- Purchase of 2,500-litre water tanks (provided 5 2,500-litre and 2 1,100-litre water tanks) for distribution points, provision of drinking water and family water purification promotion in 4 communities by the Guatemalan Red Cross.

The Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare performed the initial microbiological analysis, as well as the sampling for the water's chemical analysis. In addition, it devoted several weeks to the surveillance of Malathion poisoning cases, hygiene promotion and the cleaning and disinfecting of wells.

The United Nations System conducted an assessment visit in the first week of July 2015, including microbiological and chemical analyses for the various water sources (river, wells, and springs). On 28 July, they published the Response Plan for the Contamination of the La Pasi3n River, which was based on the results of the assessment:

<http://reliefweb.int/report/guatemala/plan-de-respuesta-guatemala-contaminaci-n-r-o-la-pasi-n-sayaxch-15-julio-2015>.

In addition, the United Nations Country Team met to analyze the situation and identify complementary actions to support national authorities. The office of the resident coordinator conducted efforts to request support from experts, in coordination with Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), OCHA, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MRNA for its acronym in Spanish), and the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (CONRED for its acronym in Spanish), which depended on the governing bodies.

Within the framework of its mandate, the Office of the High Commissioner continued providing guidance to the State on issues regarding community information, social conflict and protection for rights defenders.

In August 2015, the following was delivered:

ORGANISATION	ASSISTANCE DELIVERED
CONRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98,000 bags of water to 13 communities • 117,336 units of INCAPARINA • 961 water filters donated by OFDA
Ministry of public health and Social Welfare (MSPAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disinfection of 120 wells and 3 springs
VEA Canal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 192 barrels for water storage • 391 water jugs
University of San Carlos in Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 222 food rations
Ministry of Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 960 food rations
Vice-Ministry of Food and Nutritional Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 790 food rations

Risk assessment

The crisis timeline reports two contamination "events". **First event:** In late April 2015, the overflow from the waste pit of one of the palm oil producers reached the La Pasi3n River through one of its tributaries. Samples analyzed by the

University of San Carlos's Department of Toxicology (results were delivered to the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources [MARN]) showed concentrations of Malathion, a phosphorous pesticide. The spill caused the death of hundreds of fish as far away as 150 km downstream from the discharge point.

The second event, however, caused the most impact to the ecosystem. Apparently, the agro-industry discharged large amounts of toxic effluents from its oxidation pits into the La Pasión River. This time, even though laboratory tests did not detect the presence of pesticides, it is presumed that the massive discharge of effluents consumed the oxygen in the water, suffocating thousands of fish. According to various media reports, the affected area includes about 150 km of the river's total 345 km, ranging from the community of El Pato (to the South) all the way to the communities around Sayaxché (to the north). To date, the Prosecutor's Office for Environmental Crimes is keeping the investigation open in order to take legal action linked to environmental, civil and criminal liability. So far, the various laboratory analyses performed back up the hypothetical event described.

The impact of both events on the 150 km stretch of the La Pasión River affected 25 communities, of which 18 required humanitarian assistance. Firstly, the river is a fundamental element in the lives of communities along its banks, as it not only provides abundant food (mainly fish) and income from the sale thereof, but it also supplies the communities with water for washing clothes, personal hygiene and recreation. Furthermore, during critical winter months (September to November), it is the only source of water for human consumption. The contamination and the massive fish death have forced local authorities to prohibit using river water for any purpose, causing a series of interrelated impacts to communities along its banks.

The communities that were most affected were those directly dependent on fish for food and their financial wellbeing, as well as the farming communities who supplemented their diets with fish from the river. In some cases, the income generated from fish sales would serve to purchase agricultural inputs and tools, which meant twice the impact to mixed production communities (agriculture and fishing). According to results from the joint assessment, the population most affected by the lack of fish in family diets were women and children.

Moreover, the river and its tributaries provide many other services to riparian communities. Women wash their clothes and kitchenware in river waters, and families often use river waters for personal hygiene, but they are no longer able to do so. Even with current restrictions, children and women inevitably come into indirect or direct contact with the waters or residue from it.

The crisis, its impact and unmet humanitarian needs have caused the emergence of hotbeds of social conflict since some communities feel their needs are not being addressed. There is also strong sentiment for the agro-industry involved in the spill to be held criminally liable and forced to pay reparations and compensation to the affected families.

However, despite the communities' dissatisfaction surrounding this social problem affecting the municipality, the operation conducted by the GRC was not affected and no incidents were reported. Since a security plan was drawn up, all volunteers followed the established security guidelines.

B. Operational strategy and plan

Overall objective

Reduce the impact of chemical and microbiological contamination from the La Pasión River on the health of the people in the affected communities, through water and sanitation and hygiene promotion actions.

Proposed Strategy

The Guatemalan Red Cross based its intervention on preliminary field assessments, and it used them to focus its efforts on ensuring safe water through water treatment and the distribution of drinking water, hygiene promotion and the distribution of containers for water storage.

The selection of beneficiary communities and families was conducted in coordination with Sayaxché's emergency operations centre. Priority was given to communities whose main source of water was the La Pasión River, those who were low income, the areas where there were no aid organizations present and the communities that suffered higher levels of fish deaths. Initial plans were to assist 553 families in 5 communities, but given the community of la Ceibal's water needs, it was included on 29 June 2015.

COMMUNITY	AFFECTED FAMILIES
Canaan	83
San Juan Acul	243
El Chorro	101
La Felicidad	120
El Cedral	14
El Ceibal	18
TOTAL	579

Operational support services

In order to carry out response actions and execute the budget, both the General Directorate of the Red Cross and the Accounting, Purchasing and General Administration Department contributed to the achievement of objectives within the established timeframe.

Human Resources

The operation was implemented by the Guatemalan Red Cross's Department of Health through the Emergency Public Health Programme. Six people from the programme's technical team, who were hired with National Society funds, were responsible for leading, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the operations in the field. Throughout the operation, 14 volunteers from the branches in Coban, Petén, Santo Tomás de Castilla, Tejutla, El Palmar and Serchil were activated.

Logistics and supply chain

The process to purchase goods and services was conducted in accordance with the National Society's processes and procedures. Three quotes were required for purchases over 2,000 quetzales (more than CHF 259.42) selecting suppliers based on cost and quality analyses. Each purchase and check request was reviewed and approved by General Auditing before issuing the check or corresponding payment.

Since most purchases were conducted locally, warehouse storage was not required. All distributed supplies and items were transported to communities in GRC vehicles or with support from municipal or other government vehicles.

It was necessary to purchase jerry cans from the IFRC's Logistics Unit, which were pre-positioned in Guatemala.

Communications

Throughout the three-month operation, various media outlets were used to publicize the actions implemented by the Red Cross in Sayaxché. The Communications Department issued press releases regarding the implemented actions, which were in turn shared through social networks, the Red Cross's website and the IFRC's website. Likewise, achievements from the GRC's response for the La Pasión River contamination were presented during the commemoration of the International Humanitarian Response Day. In addition, technical team members provided information to local radio and television.

Video of the operation: <https://vimeo.com/151580045>

Security

Despite the political climate in the country, the series of peaceful demonstrations occurring in various departments, and the dissatisfaction of Sayaxché residents because of the river's contamination, at no time was the operation's implementation compromised. Both volunteers and staff followed security measures at all times.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The planning of response actions to be implemented in Sayaxché was carried out by the technical team from the Health Directorate's Emergency Public Health Programme, and it was based on water, sanitation, and hygiene assessments. Activity monitoring tools and weekly report formats were developed as part of the planning.

The aspects monitored on a monthly basis included the number of beneficiaries, litres of water distributed, people who participated in educational sessions, provision of supplies (jerry cans, water tanks) and cleaning of wells. The quality of the water distributed was also monitored, specifically in terms of residual chlorine, the acid/alkaline level (pH) and coliform bacteria. Finally, the volunteers and technical team in the field were also monitored constantly.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Quality programming - Areas common to all sectors

Outcome 1: Continuous and detailed evaluation and analysis to inform the operation's design and implementation.

Output 1.1. Initial needs assessments are conducted in consultation with beneficiaries.

Achievements

The Guatemalan Red Cross staff from branches conducted rapid assessments in order to draft the plan of action. A beneficiary satisfaction survey was conducted and yielded the following information:

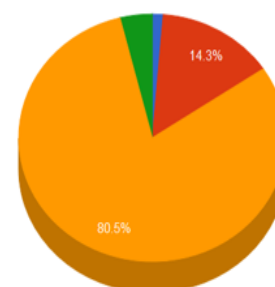
Seventy-eight participants - 79 per cent women and 21 per cent men; average age: 37; 92 per cent were beneficiaries and 8 per cent community leaders; they were given a satisfaction survey to assess the quality of the response: 100 per cent said they benefitted from water distributions, 64 per cent from the jerry cans and 62 per cent from hygiene promotion sessions.

In total, 100 per cent of people acknowledged that Red Cross presence was timely, met their emergency needs, and that they were treated well by Red Cross members: 93.5 per cent rated it as good, 5.2 per cent as fair, and only 1.3 per cent said they were treated badly, arguing that the distribution point was too far away due to the fact that the difficult access to the households did not allow for a different water distribution point.

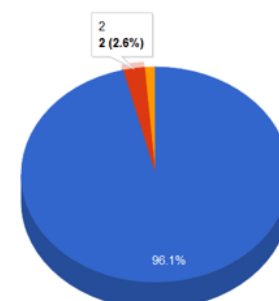
In total, 100 per cent of people claimed to have participated in all of the activities, and 96.1 per cent acknowledged that the Red Cross fulfilled all of its commitments. Additionally, those who claimed that commitments were not fulfilled was due to the fact that water for washing purposes was delivered to other families and not to them; the water was delivered to other families because the priority at that moment was drinking water and personal hygiene.

In terms of the quality of the items delivered, specifically jerry cans and water tanks, most people believed these were of good quality, some people believed the quality was fair; and only 1.3 per cent believed them to be of poor quality, specifically the jerry can's lid. Overall, the material that was delivered was of good quality.

As for the educational sessions (graph 2), 80.5 per cent of people thought they were good, 14.3 per cent thought they were fair, 1.3 per cent did not participate, and the rest believed they were bad, offering no justification for their opinion. In terms of the times in which the activities took place, 87 per cent thought it was adequate and 14.3 per cent were unable to participate.



Gráfica 2
Sesiones educativas



Gráfica. 1
Cumplimiento de compromisos
asumidos por Cruz Roja

Challenges

One of the main challenges was the inability to fulfil the SPHERE standards in terms of meeting the minimum requirements per person per day. This was due to the limited capacity to transport water to the affected communities, in addition to the low consumption of water by some families when the distribution started.

Among the situations that were not contemplated at the beginning of the intervention was the lack of knowledge regarding the degree of Malathion contamination in both the river and the water sources. While a series of lab tests were performed by local authorities, results were delivered 20 days or more after the sample was taken. Therefore, an analysis was conducted in coordination with local authorities to identify a source of safe water, which turned out to be a deep-water well within the municipality's limits. This source of water does not come into contact with the environment or phreatic mantle, which makes it ideal for purification and subsequent distribution to the affected families.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Outcome 2: 553 families in Sayaxché have improved their access to safe water and hygiene conditions.

Output 2.1: 553 families affected by the La Pasion River's contamination have been reached through awareness-raising lectures on health, hygiene promotion and proper water handling.

Output 2.2: 553 families affected by the La Pasion River's contamination have jerry cans.

Output 2.3: 553 families affected by the La Pasion River's contamination have safe water.

Achievements

The GRC's rapid assessment of water and sanitation conditions found that families did not have drinking water. They obtain part of their water from a limited number of low-flow artisan wells, springs and other sources located 30 to 40 minutes away from their homes, but mostly from the La Pasi3n River. However, every winter, the river rises until it submerges the only two springs of the two communities that were evaluated. Neither the families nor the community have any water storage capacity, and the municipality has neither tanker trucks nor any other systems to transport drinking water to the communities.

Currently, in addition to the river's contamination from organophosphates, the biggest problem is that the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare reports that both the La Pasi3n River and all artisan wells assessed are contaminated with coliform bacteria.

This contamination coupled with the impoverished state of the targeted communities and their limited access to employment and basic health and education services put people at risk to water-borne diseases. If no action is taken to ensure the consumption of safe water, an outbreak of acute diarrhoeal diseases is imminent, as is a resulting deterioration in the population's health.

1. **Team mobilization and activation of personnel:** The team responded on 22 June. Two vehicles were mobilized from Guatemala City with water production, disinfection, storage, and distribution equipment for communities, as well as educational material and jerry cans for the affected families. On 23 June, the volunteers from Pet3n, Cob3n and Santo Tomas were deployed to Sayaxch3.
2. **Coordination with community leaders:** After the rapid assessment, the project was presented to community leaders seeking to reach an agreement regarding the actions to be conducted (water distribution, jerry can and water tank provision, hygiene promotion), location, maintenance and security of distribution points, and beneficiary registration. These agreements obtained after the meeting were recorded in community minutes, duly stamped and signed by all parties
3. **Drinking water production:** A deep-water municipal well, which was not contaminated with organophosphates and with sufficient flow to produce drinking water, was identified. Thanks to the simplified system, which consists of activated carbon and silica filters followed by chlorination of water in storage tanks, the Guatemalan Red Cross was able to produce and store 15,000 litres of water per day. It should be noted that the Ministry of Health lent a 5,000-litre water storage bladder, which was returned after two weeks of use.
4. **Transport of drinking water:** Water was transported using tanks provided by the Ministry of Health and hauled by Guatemalan army trucks; the municipality paid for the trucks' fuel. The transport capacity was limited to 10,000 litres, which meant having to make two trips per day. No other non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) participated in this operation.

5. **Setting up of water distribution points:** Seven water distribution points were set up in 5 communities. In total, The Red Cross provided 5 2,500-litre and 2 1,100-litre water tanks, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food donated 5 1,100-litre water tanks were donated by. The water storage capacity of communities was 20,200 litres, equivalent to 7 litres of drinking water per person per day.
6. **Distribution of drinking water:** From 26 June to 12 September 2015, the Guatemalan Red Cross distributed 464,534 litres of drinking water to 6 communities, with support from both the IFRC and the Spanish Red Cross. The Guatemalan Red Cross intended to end the distribution of drinking water on 30 September 2015.
7. **Distribution of jerry cans:** In order to increase household drinking water storage capacity, the Guatemalan Red Cross distributed 1 20-litre jerry can (1 per family) to 117 families in Canaan, 2 20-litre jerry cans (2 per family) to 14 families in El Cedral and 2 2.5-litre bags to 200 families in San Juan Acul. Likewise, CONRED, with support from VEA Canal, provided 5-gallon jerry cans to 221 families in La Felicidad and El Chorro; however, not enough of them were provided.
8. **Hygiene promotion:** One of the most important activities carried out by volunteers to improve family practices was using the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) methodology in hygiene promotion, including home water treatment and good hygiene habits. This methodology was used with 752 people, including school-age children.

Overall, the target set was achieved. Initially, plans were to benefit 553 families with jerry cans, hygiene promotion, and the distribution of drinking water. Even though the following table shows that the Guatemalan Red Cross did not distribute jerry cans to two communities (La Felicidad and El Chorro), they received five -gallon jerry cans from the emergency operations centre.

COMMUNITY	TOTAL FAMILIES	DISTRIBUTION OF JERRY CANS		HYGIENE PROMOTION		DISTRIBUTION OF DRINKING WATER	
		Total distributed	Families benefitted	Participating people	Participating families	Benefitting families	Litres distributed
Canaán	83	87	87	164	87	83	84,200
San Juan Acul	243	400	243	200	200	243	101,000
La Felicidad	120			243	158	120	110,550
El Chorro	101			191	98	101	148,200
El Cedral	14	30	15	0	0	14	20,314
El Ceibal	18	19	19	18	19	18	270
TOTAL	579	536	364	816	562	579	464,534

There were some inconveniences caused by the population's refusal to drink chlorinated water for cultural reasons. Therefore, Guatemalan Red Cross volunteers conducted an awareness-raising process before and during the intervention, which facilitated the families' acceptance of the delivered water.

Challenges

From the beginning, a series of factors were anticipated that would adversely affect the response. Preliminary information from local health authorities showed that there was a limited capacity to transport water to the affected communities. This issue was resolved thanks to the 2,500- and 1,100-litre water tanks provided by the health department, the truck provided by the Guatemalan army and the funds provided by the municipality of Sayaxché to pay for the fuel.

Lessons learned

A lessons learned workshop was held on 11 September in Sayaxché in order to evaluate the implementation process for the response in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene due to contamination of the La Pasi3n River.

Attendees included the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, the municipality of Sayaxch3, the Ministry of Education, the National Commission of Protected Areas, Radio Sayaxch3, the technical team from the Health area and Guatemalan Red Cross volunteers. The National Disaster Response Coordinating Secretariat was unable to attend due to flooding reported elsewhere on that same day.

The workshop started with the Guatemalan Red Cross presenting the project's achievements and its scope, emphasizing that these were made possible thanks to the active participation of EOC members. Despite mentioning that the aim of the workshop was to evaluate the Guatemalan Red Cross's response, participants asked to assess **all of the response actions carried out by government institutions.**

Below are the aspects assessed:

1. Overall response achievements
2. Needs and damage assessment
3. Prioritization of actions
4. Beneficiary selection
5. Direction
6. Coordination
7. Population satisfaction
8. Quality of services
9. Commitment fulfilment
10. Community engagement
11. Conflict resolution

After analyzing the above, the following points were drafted jointly:

1. It is necessary to standardize an action plan for disaster response that includes environmental pollution elements, clearly defined responsibilities for each institution, standardized formats for needs and damage assessment, detailed evaluations and beneficiary selection, and that incorporates cultural aspects. This plan should clearly establish that population census data and detailed assessments should be used in order to better prioritize and focus the intervention so as to reach the neediest families more efficiently. In view of the difficulties encountered in the transport of drinking water, the plan should include strategies to conduct this activity at a lower cost.
2. Long-term prevention and mitigation are required for river management since continued contamination is still a threat.
3. Given that the river was physically and microbiologically polluted even before the emergency was declared, it is necessary to prepare a municipal plan to ensure drinking water coverage for the population that uses La Pasi3n River water for consumption. This plan may include development of mechanical wells projects and pumping systems, as well as water reservoirs.
4. Now that the alert level has been downgraded, it is necessary to develop a rehabilitation and reconstruction plan for the affected communities in a participatory manner.
5. In order to ensure a successful intervention, it is necessary to engage the people in affected communities. To this end, Community Minutes should be prepared and community and institutional commitments should be signed that clearly establish the level of participation by both parties, incorporating the contributions and suggestions of people involved in response actions as much as possible. Finally, a population satisfaction assessment must be conducted for all response actions, not only those of the Guatemalan Red Cross intervention
6. Involve teachers in emergency response in order to deliver messages directly to parents through their children. Enforce the Healthy Schools agreement between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.
7. Since two organizations delivered water when the response began to affected families without informing the EOC, it is necessary to ensure that the Ministry of Health monitors the quality of all water distributed, not only the treated water distributed by the Guatemalan Red Cross.
8. In view of the threat of social conflicts, it is necessary to establish from the start which institution or structure will ensure peaceful negotiations and conflict resolution. Faith-based social outreach organizations or the Secretariat for Agricultural Affairs could be invited.
9. Promote the allocation of a future emergency fund. This applies to all of the institutions, and it would facilitate a more effective and timely response.
10. It is necessary to ensure that educational sessions are carried out. These should be used to promote the participation of people in order to solve their needs in terms of water, sanitation, and hygiene and not only to

provide information to families.

11. The PHAST methodology, with its context-specific materials, is extremely useful in this regard. Moreover, in order for the population to buy into consuming chlorinated water, it is necessary to involve secondary actors who can help convey messages and influence changes in habits. These could include teachers, community leaders and even children and adolescents.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation, please contact:

- **Guatemalan Red Cross: Daniel Javiel, general director, phone: +502 2381-6565; email: direcciongeneral@cuzroja.org.gt**

IFRC country coordination office for Guatemala and El Salvador

- **Marissa Soberanis, country coordinator for Guatemala and El Salvador, phone: +502 5508-7026, email: marissa.soberanis@ifrc.org**

In Panama:

- **IFRC regional office: Carlos Inigo Barrena, disaster response and crisis and early recovery coordinator; telephone: +507 6679-3238, email: c.i.barrena@ifrc.org**

In Geneva:

- **Christine South, quality assurance senior officer, phone: +41.22.730.4529, email: christine.south@ifrc.org**

For Performance and Accountability

(planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- **In IFRC regional office: Priscila Gonzalez, planning and monitoring and reporting unit coordinator, phone: +507 317 3050; email: priscila.gonzalez@ifrc.org**

For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **In IFRC regional office: Alejandra Van Hensbergen, , phone: +507 317 3050, email: alejandra.vanhensbergen@ifrc.org relationship management unit senior officer**

➤ Click [here](#) to return to the title page

Disaster Response Financial Report

MDRGT007 - Guatemala - River contamination

Timeframe: 14 Jul 15 to 14 Sep 15

Appeal Launch Date: 14 Jul 15

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2015/7-12	Programme	MDRGT007
Budget Timeframe	2015/7-9	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
A. Budget		16,858				16,858	
B. Opening Balance							
Income							
<u>Other Income</u>							
<i>DREF Allocations</i>		16,858				16,858	
C4. Other Income		16,858				16,858	
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)		16,858				16,858	
D. Total Funding = B + C		16,858				16,858	

* Funding source data based on information provided by the donor

II. Movement of Funds

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
B. Opening Balance							
C. Income		16,858				16,858	
E. Expenditure		-12,193				-12,193	
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		4,665				4,665	

Disaster Response Financial Report

MDRGT007 - Guatemala - River contamination

Timeframe: 14 Jul 15 to 14 Sep 15

Appeal Launch Date: 14 Jul 15

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2015/7-12	Programme	MDRGT007
Budget Timeframe	2015/7-9	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability		
	A					B	A - B	
BUDGET (C)			16,858			16,858		
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	1,796		2,488			2,488	-692	
Utensils & Tools	2,028		1,623			1,623	405	
Other Supplies & Services	28						28	
Total Relief items, Construction, Sup	3,852		4,111			4,111	-259	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Storage	752						752	
Distribution & Monitoring	658						658	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	1,457		1,026			1,026	431	
Logistics Services	90		114			114	-24	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	2,958		1,140			1,140	1,818	
Personnel								
National Staff			8			8	-8	
National Society Staff	564		383			383	181	
Volunteers	4,859		4,104			4,104	755	
Other Staff Benefits			62			62	-62	
Total Personnel	5,423		4,556			4,556	867	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	423						423	
Total Workshops & Training	423						423	
General Expenditure								
Travel	940		1,006			1,006	-66	
Information & Public Relations	795		626			626	169	
Office Costs	141		128			128	13	
Communications	733		58			58	675	
Financial Charges	564		-175			-175	740	
Total General Expenditure	3,173		1,642			1,642	1,532	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Services Support Recove	1,029		744			744	285	
Total Indirect Costs	1,029		744			744	285	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	16,858		12,193			12,193	4,665	
VARIANCE (C - D)			4,665			4,665		

Disaster Response Financial Report**MDRGT007 - Guatemala - River contamination**

Timeframe: 14 Jul 15 to 14 Sep 15

Appeal Launch Date: 14 Jul 15

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2015/7-12	Programme	MDRGT007
Budget Timeframe	2015/7-9	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

IV. Breakdown by subsector

Business Line / Sub-sector	Budget	Opening Balance	Income	Funding	Expenditure	Closing Balance	Deferred Income
BL2 - Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people							
Disaster response	16,858		16,858	16,858	12,193	4,665	
Subtotal BL2	16,858		16,858	16,858	12,193	4,665	
GRAND TOTAL	16,858		16,858	16,858	12,193	4,665	