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Emergency Plan of Action operation update

Cuba: Drought



DREF Operation Update No. 2	MDRCU003
Date of issue: 2 December 2016	Date of disaster: May 2016
Responsible for the EPoA: Santiago Luengo, Acting Regional Disaster Management Coordinator for the Caribbean	Point of contact (name and title): Dr. Luis Foyo Ceballos, Director General of the Cuban Red Cross (CRC)
Operation start date: 27 May 2016	Expected timeframe: 6 months (operation will be extended by 15 additional days); the end date is now 17 December 2016
Overall operation budget: 194,508 Swiss francs (CHF)	
Number of people affected: 500,000 people	Number of people to be assisted: 10,000 people (2,000 Families)
Host National Society presence (no. of volunteers, staff and branches): 1 national headquarters, approximately 1,000 staff members, 45,000 volunteers, and 15 provincial and 168 municipal branches.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the Operation: Norwegian Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the Operation: Cuban Government agencies: Ministry of Civil Defence, National Water Resource Institute, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment	

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Summary

On 2 June 2016, the IFRC allocated CHF 194,508 from the DREF to the Cuban Red Cross to support the delivery of assistance to 10,000 people (2,000 families). The operation was initially expected to be implemented over a three-month period and completed by 2 September 2016; however, unforeseen delays necessitated a three-month extension, with a new operation end date of 2 of December 2016. Nevertheless, further unanticipated delays require an additional 15-day extension to complete the outstanding activities, and the operation's end date is now 17 December 2016 as a result. This DREF Operations Update serves to report on the water and sanitation activities' progress and delays, as well as extend the operation's **end date to 17 December 2016**.

Summary of changes made to the emergency plan of action: Revisions have been made to the emergency plan of action (EPoA) for this DREF operation. The Cuban Red Cross (CRC) continues to have difficulties accessing drinking water in the province of Santiago, and the risk is increasing because the levels in the dam and the tributaries continue to decrease. Moreover, the lack of safe water remains a concern for health authorities due to the hazards associated with sporadic availability. Currently, the "supply cycles" are belated and the communities have to wait for more than 20 days to receive the water supplied by the government through pipes. The Civil Defense in the province of Santiago de Cuba has established a working group for coordination in which the Cuban Red Cross participates, thereby promoting its institutional image.

Timeframe of the operation: The Cuban Red Society requested a fifteen-day extension in order to complete the remaining activities.

The death of Cuba's former leader Fidel Castro on 25 November 2016 halted all of last week's coordination and implementation activities, including the National Society's receipt of goods. In addition, Hurricane Otto delayed the shipments from Panama to Cuba.

A. Situation Analysis

Description of the Disaster

A long uninterrupted drought combined with heavy unseasonable rains attributed to the El Niño phenomenon, climate change, and the increase in earthquakes over the past two months augur difficult times for Cuba. In recent years, rainfall patterns during both the dry and rainy seasons have failed to reach normal historical values, which has caused diminished groundwater resources and the drying up of the rivers and dams on which the population relies for its water supply.

Cuba is now suffering from the effects of climate change, especially rising temperatures and the scourge of a severe drought, which is considered the worst in the last 115 years. It is well known that a hydrological year with an annual rainfall average below 78 per cent will generate conditions that lead to this threat emerging and continuing for the next year; the low levels of accumulated rainfall for more than 12 months in the country have caused a number of the country's reservoirs to drop 38 percent below their capacity; moreover, 98 reservoirs are below 25 per cent and 26 are completely dry.

National Water Resource Institute (INRH) authorities reported that the situation is becoming more complex and critical due to the extended dry period and the continued decrease in the dam levels. The drier groundwater basins are located in the eastern regions, especially in the province of Santiago de Cuba, which has a population of 1,057,404 inhabitants, 71 per cent of whom in urban areas and 28.9 in rural areas. With less than 30 per cent of water capacity in reservoirs and rainfall dropping below historical averages, this region is currently facing one of the most severe droughts in both the province's and the country's history.

The province of Santiago de Cuba has 9 municipalities, 4 of which are the most affected: Santiago de Cuba, Palma Soriano, Ill Frente and Guamá; the drought has impacted approximately 520,560 people (94,000 families), affecting people in the urban areas most severely.

May is considered the rainiest month in Cuba (start of the rainy season), but rainfall in the country declined significantly due climate variability, particularly in Santiago de Cuba. The beginning of the May to October's rainy season was affected by the El Niño-Southern Oscillation event, which has persisted in the equatorial Pacific Ocean since early 2015, reaching its height in November 2015 before diminishing in strength. Usually when a strong El Niño event declines in the equatorial Pacific, rains in the Cuban territory during the onset of the rainy season tend to be below average, primarily during the May to July quarter; however, it must be noted that not all El Niños behave in a similar manner, as these in turn are influenced by other oceanic-atmospheric circulation patterns.

The government has been providing water through water trucking; however, the extended drought has stretched its capacity to the point that a relief intervention is needed. In this regard, the communities' greatest need, as identified by government authorities, is containers to store water and meet household needs. The provision of 1,500-litre tanks to increase water storage capacity has been identified as a priority, and other actions include the provision of 200-litre tanks and 10-litre buckets to families to store drinking water.

El Niño forecasts for 2016

The El Niño forecasts for 2016 remained unchanged for the DREF EPoA issued on 2 June 2016. For further information, see the [DREF EPoA](#).

Summary of current response

Overview of Host National Society

In the area of intervention (at the provincial level), the CRC has one provincial headquarters (in the city of Santiago) and nine municipal branches with a staff of 32 people, as well as 1 5-ton truck, 2 4-wheel drive vehicles and 1 motorcycle. In terms of storage, the CRC has access to government warehouses, which are free of charge to use and have security, in the province of Santiago in case of an emergency.

As of December 2015, the province reportedly had 4,087 active volunteers, who were trained to conduct activities including first aid, operations and relief, restoration of family links, youth section, psychological support and water and sanitation.

The CRC's branch in Santiago has been actively participating in the planning and implementation of several community-level projects financed by the Norwegian Red Cross (called PRECOS, which stands for "Preparing Communities"). The provincial branch was also actively involved during the hurricane Sandy response in 2012; with

funding from the Norwegian Red Cross, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the IFRC; it conducted humanitarian aid distribution and shelter activities, as well as training in participatory methodologies such as safe roofs and water and sanitation.

The CRC in Santiago is currently working and coordinating preparedness and response activities for droughts and earthquakes with Civil Defence and the fire department.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) conduct activities with the CRC on a regular basis; however, neither of them has physical presence in the country. The collaboration between the organizations normally involves specific activities such as the development and financing of the ICRC's HELP (health in emergencies in large populations) course.

The Norwegian Red Cross has been present in Cuba since 2008, funding and technically supporting the Cuban Red Cross on PRECO, which is currently in its fifth phase. During this time, there has been a permanent Norwegian Red Cross delegate in-country, making it the only National Society physically present in Cuba.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

Civil Defence in the province of Santiago has a key role in the actions being conducted, and it has taken the drought threat very seriously.

Top government authorities are conducting coordination meetings in order to review the ongoing activities; the meetings take place every Saturday at 6 am to discuss unresolved problems and to make the appropriate decisions about how to better support the drought-affected population. Additionally, the government has been providing water trucking to the affected communities.

The government has also held meetings with the National Society to coordinate actions that require permits from the Cuban government, such as coordination with the Department of Health Education, Ministry of Public Health to produce prevention materials and disseminate information, the development of key awareness messages, advocacy and self-care for the population; the meetings have also discussed the establishment of mechanisms for reporting and the holding of weekly coordination meetings with Civil Defence and other government agencies involved in decision making. Moreover, the government has already authorized the National Society to import water tanks

At the population level, the information flow with community representatives has been effective, as most of the population is aware of both the problem and the mitigation actions being proposed. Despite the difficult situation, discontent has not been detected during the visits.

Needs analysis, beneficiary selection and risk assessment and scenario planning

Needs were identified during the initial and detailed assessments of the emergency, and they have remained relatively consistent throughout the operation.

B. Operational strategy and plan

Overall objective

Respond to the immediate needs of 2,000 families (10,000 people) in the province of Santiago that have been affected by the prolonged drought.

Operational Support Services

Support services include Human Resources, Communications, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Reporting and Administration and Finance. Please see the EPoA issued on 2 June 2016 [for more details](#).

Logistics and supply chain

There were some small changes to the Logistics and supply chain such as the location for the receipt of the 2,000 250-litre tanks with lids and the 6,000 plastic buckets with lids. Previously, these items were supposed to be received in Havana; however, since the government is providing transportation and warehousing, the storage of these items in Santiago de Cuba, where there are storage facilities, has been requested instead.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

Outcome 1: Contribute to improved access, storage and management of water for 2,000 families (10,000 people) in selected communities and schools in nine municipalities in the province of Santiago	Outputs		% of achievement
	Output 1.1 Distribution of 10-litre buckets for water storage to 2,000 families (3 buckets per family)		98%
	Output 1.2 Distribution of materials to treat and control the quality of water		100%
	Output 1.3 Establishment of nine community groups (one per municipality) to monitor water quality		100%
	Output 1.4 Hygiene promotion activities are implemented in selected communities and schools		50%
Activities	Is implementation on time?		% progress (estimate)
	Yes (x)	No (x)	
Purchase of 6,000 plastic 10-litre buckets		X	98.3%
Purchase of 5M aquatab tablets with a 10 litre-capacity		X	100%
Purchase of 350 pool testers to measure chlorine		X	100%
Purchase of DPD3 (35,000) and DPD1 (35,000) tablets		X	100%
Distribution of buckets, aquatabs and pool testers		X	100%
Establishment of agreements with communities for community activities		X	100%
Distribution of 2,000 250-litre tanks with lids		X	100%
Distribution of 1,000-litre tanks for the Ministry of Public Health facilities		X	0%
Purchase of 4,000 long-lasting insecticide treated [mosquito nets] (LLITNs) (2 per family)		X	98.75%
Printing of educational material		X	50%
Purchase of 500,000 plastic 10-litre trash bags		X	100%
Establishment of community monitoring committees		X	100%
Progress towards outcomes			
<p>Distribution of relief items The CRC was not able to deliver items to 50 families (LLITNs, tanks and buckets) because the country observed a national mourning period following the death of Castro, which required the National Society to provide services to the population during the public events and resulted in the temporary suspension of the distributions.</p> <p>Delivery of Education Materials This activity has not been completed yet because the funding for the printed materials was not received until 9 November 2016, thereby delaying the printing of the materials until 25 November 2016.</p>			

Quality programming / Areas common to all sectors

Outcome 2 Continuous and detailed assessment and analysis is used to inform the design and implementation of the operation	Outputs		% of achievement
	Output 1.1 The management of the operation is informed by a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system		100%
	Output 1.2 Operation activities are disseminated at the local, national and regional levels		80%

Activities	Is implementation on time?		% progress (estimate)
	Yes (x)	No (x)	
Hiring of operational staff and staff to support the operation in the field	X		100%
Community assemblies to present the project		X	100%
Monitoring visits by CRC's central headquarters	X		100%
Progress reports on affected communities		X	100%
Documentary on activities		X	90%
Beneficiary satisfaction survey		X	50%
Evaluation of lessons learned		X	100%
Development of beneficiary stories		X	50%
Monitoring visits by IFRC		X	100%
Progress towards outcomes			
The selection of volunteers from the Red Cross branch in Santiago de Cuba to support the field operations has been completed.			
The remaining activities will be completed during the 15-day extension.			

Contact Information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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