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Emergency appeal operation update

Bolivia: floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Emergency appeal n° MDRBO007
GLIDE n° [FL-2012-000032-BOL](#)
Operation update n° 1
14 June 2012

Period covered by this Ops Update: 14
March to 23 April 2012

Appeal target (current): 503,659 Swiss
francs

Appeal coverage: 51%; [<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report, or here to link to contact details >](#)

Appeal history:

- This [Emergency Appeal](#) was launched on 14 March 2012 for 503,659 CHF to assist 2,000 families (10,000 beneficiaries) for 6 months.
- [Disaster Relief Emergency Fund \(DREF\)](#): 116,138 Swiss francs were initially allocated from the Federation's DREF to support the Bolivian Red Cross to respond.



Volunteers of the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) prepared the food parcels to be distributed to affected families in the departments of Cochabamba, Oruro and Pando. Source: BRC

Summary: In early 2012, Bolivia experienced a severe rainy season that affected almost 14,000 families and prompted the government to declare a State of National Emergency on 22 February. In response to the situation, the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) developed a plan of action to assist 10,000 beneficiaries with food and non-food relief items, health and water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities aimed at preventing the exacerbation of a dengue outbreak, and livelihood recovery activities. During the period covered by the current update, the National Society has reached 500 families in the city of Cobija, Pando department, with food parcels and hygiene kits. In addition, the BRC is carrying out coordination meetings with community members and local authorities, as well as printing informational materials and procuring mosquito nets in order to start implementing the health promotion and dengue prevention activities as soon as the relief distributions conclude. Given the current coverage of the emergency appeal, the National Society plans to complete all water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities in an integrated manner with those of the health sector focusing its efforts only in Cobija, department of Pando. The National Society also plans to reach 500 families with livelihood recovery activities. However, implementation is jeopardized by a lack of funding and livelihood recovery activities are currently suspended pending more contributions to the emergency appeal budget which has only been 51 per cent covered.

The situation

From the second week of January 2012, the rainy season in Bolivia intensified significantly as result of La Niña weather phenomenon. A month later, the situation was quite severe, with several overflowed rivers, landslides, hailstorms and widespread flooding across the country affecting 121 municipalities. On 7 March, the Vice-Ministry of Civil Defence (Viceministerio de Defensa Civil, VIDECE) reported 13,817 families affected and 13 confirmed deaths. Damages to the road network resulted in many communities also suffering a shortage of essential supplies. The intense weather of this year has also affected atypical areas such as Cobija, the capital city of the Pando department. Given the extent of the disaster, on 22 February the Bolivian government declared a State of National Emergency for the departments of Cochabamba, Pando, Oruro and La Paz through the Decree No. 1145. The following table presents a summary of the municipalities, families and houses affected by the floods, hailstorms and landslides per department:

Department	No. affected municipalities	No. affected families	No. affected houses	No. deaths
Chuquisaca	20	1,950	-	2
Cochabamba	22	1,994	252	-
Potosí	21	1,942	6	2
La Paz	27	2,040	40	5
Oruro	8	2,452	-	-
Pando	5	1,481	581	-
Tarija	7	1,435	35	1
Santa Cruz	7	349	38	3
Beni	4	174	9	-
TOTAL	121	13,817	968	13

Source: Vice-Ministry of Civil Defence (Viceministerio de Defensa Civil, VIDECE) Data as of 7 March 2012

However, the outlook of the situation was aggravated by the dengue outbreak that Bolivia was experiencing at the time of the floods, with a decree from the Ministry of Health and Sports (No. 1869) declaring a state of national dengue alert and sanitation emergency for the La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz departments.

Currently, the scenario has improved and the situation has stabilized with the discontinuation of rains. However, the National Society continues to monitor the situation, keeping close communication with VIDECE to prepare in case new emergencies develop.

Coordination and partnerships

The coordination of the disaster response at national level is under VIDECE with whom the National Society has a close working partnership. The BRC is part of the technical and operational team of national response, where its information gathering capacity plays an important role. This information is shared not only with the governmental authorities but also with other organizations involved in the national response system.

Within the National Society, the emergency operation is under the leadership of the disaster relief unit which is working alongside the health and communications departments. In addition, with the assistance of a Canadian Red Cross contribution, a member of the Regional Intervention Team from the Paraguayan Red Cross was able to travel to Bolivia for six weeks, from March to April 2012 to support early coordination. The National Society is also being supported by the Red Cross Society of China. Through this partnership, some 300 families from rural areas of the Pando department will receive food and non-food relief items.

National Society Capacity Building: During coordinating meetings with the authorities of the Cobija municipality and with representatives of



neighbourhood committees became evident that there is strong interest in supporting activities that go beyond the immediate relief distribution and contribute towards longer term risk reduction and resilience. The National Society is now evaluating how to respond to this request; however, as mentioned in the health sector below, the BRC's plan of auctioned already contemplate conducting health interventions using the Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) *in Action* approach with selected communities. These interventions will contribute in empowering communities to address their priority health needs and be more resilient in front of future emergency situations.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

During the period covered by the current update, the National Society has reached 500 families in the city of Cobija, Pando department, with food parcels and hygiene kits. In addition, the BRC is carrying out coordinating meetings with community members and local authorities, as well as printing informational materials and procuring mosquito nets, in order to start implementing the health promotion and dengue prevention activities once relief distributions conclude. Given the current coverage of the emergency appeal, the National Society plans to complete all water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities in an integrated manner with those of the health sector focusing its efforts only in Cobija. Livelihood recovery activities have been suspended pending more contributions to the emergency appeal.

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: 2,000 affected families from the departments of Pando, Cochabamba and Oruro will benefit from the provision of essential food and non-food items to alleviate the effects of the emergency.

Output: 2,000 families (10,000 persons) will receive food parcels and hygiene kits

Activities:

- Identify and select families in affected areas.
- Procure locally food parcels and hygiene kits.
- Develop a 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 reporting on relief distributions.

Progress: The National Society concluded the tendering and procurement process of food parcels and hygiene kits and has started the distribution of relief items. Thus far, 500 families from the city of Cobija, department of Pando, have benefited from these relief items, 25 per cent of the original target. Through the National Society's efforts, the economic impact of the emergency on the daily lives of affected families has been partially alleviated.

Municipality	Neighbourhood	No. of families
Cobija	Junin	50
	Mapajo	180
	Villa Montes	180
	Cataratas	90
Total		500

The identification and selection of families was carried out alongside the presidents or representatives of the neighbourhoods committees (Organización Territorial de Base, OTB). With the OTB taking the leadership of the process, the most affected families were registered and those who had received little or no support were prioritized. The community's involvement in the selection of beneficiaries was a successful experience for the BRC, who then proceeded to personally provide numbered tickets to the designated families. On the day of distribution, volunteers of the National Society went house to house to hand over the relief supplies once the ticket and identification were provided. This method enabled the adequate monitoring of the current needs of the selected families.

In addition, the National Society with the support of the Red Cross Society of China has also reached 300 families from rural areas of Pando department with food parcels and hygiene kits. In May 800 families from Cochabamba and 700 from Oruro will also be assisted with these relief items.

Emergency health	
Outcome: The risk of dengue and other water related diseases of 1,000 families in the affected areas is reduced through a comprehensive response.	
Outputs	Activities planned
<p>Community-based disease prevention and health promotion is provided to 1,000 families (5,000 beneficiaries) in 5 departments</p> <p>All branches of the National Society are involved in the emergency planning process to respond to health needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct five rapid health assessments • Refresh training on epidemic control for volunteers • Train municipal volunteers, teachers and other health personnel on epidemic control and community health promotion. • Carry out educational campaigns on dengue prevention at community level • Distribute 1,000 mosquito nets impregnated with insecticide • Conduct a communications campaign with radio spots and reading materials. • Conduct and monitor community-based health first aid (CBHFA) programmes with selected communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct one workshop with National Society's staff and volunteers from their nine branches for a health contingency planning process.

Progress: The disease prevention and health promotion activities will start in full force once all distribution of hygiene kits and food parcels are concluded. The National Society, after concluding the health assessments, is now completing the final preparations and arrangements for the trainings of volunteers and the development of information materials. However, given the current coverage of the appeal, all activities will only focus on the city of Cobija which was one of the most affected areas and where there were high concerns for the increase of the dengue outbreak. The staff of the BRC's headquarters is at the moment coordinating with the region's branch and local governmental authorities, and will designate a volunteer within the branch to work as local coordinator to monitor the situation and implement all activities.

Additionally, the National Society is in the final stages of procuring the impregnated mosquito nets and printing brochures with information on their use and care as well as other educational materials to be distributed to communities and used during workshops. The communication department is also working on radio spots that are part of their communication campaign.

Finally, the BRC is discontinuing the second output unless more funds become available through the appeal.

Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion	
Outcome: The risk of water related diseases of 1,000 families is reduced through vector control activities and access to safe drinking water.	
Outputs	Activities planned
1,000 families (5,000 persons) in 5 departments where dengue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with local authorities the design and implementation of activities.

<p>is endemic are reached with community cleaning campaigns and fumigation.</p> <p>1,000 families are reached with items for the treatment and safe storage of water</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete cleaning campaign targeting mosquito-breeding grounds with the participation of educational centres. • Procure fumigation supplies to assist the local government authorities in community and household fumigation activities. • Carry out hygiene promotion in educational centres. • Assess needs for safe water and select priority areas. • Distribute two 10-litre jerry cans to 1,000 families. • Procure and distribute chlorine (8% sodium hypochlorite solution) for household water treatment. • Monitor the quality of water used in selected communities. • Monitor sanitation infrastructures and excreta disposal.
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Progress: The National Society is completing all water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities in an integrated manner with the activities of the health sector. Therefore, with the current coverage of the emergency appeal, the BRC is focusing its efforts to reach the affected families in Cobija, department of Pando.

As with the mosquito nets, the National Society is in the final stages of procuring the jerry cans and chlorine to support families with the safe storage and treatment of water at household level. The BRC is also coordinating with local authorities and health officials to start their hygiene promotion campaigns in the month of May.

Livelihoods

Outcome: Contribute to the early recovery of 500 families who have lost their livelihoods as a result of the floods.	
Outputs	Activities planned
500 families receive technical and material support to recover their agricultural production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and develop a technical assessment and intervention strategy. • Establish mutual collaboration agreements with national institutions (agricultural associations, cooperatives and/or NGOs). • Provide technical support on the conservation of soils. • Distribute seeds commonly used in the area. • Organize alongside the communities the building of protective barriers around crops. • Conduct monitoring and evaluation activities.

Progress: With some 10,000 families estimated to have been affected with the loss of their animals and crops due to the rains in March, the government and humanitarian agencies had firmly established the need to support families to recover their livelihoods. In order to achieve their goal of assisting 500 of the hardest-hit families to recover lost agricultural production the National Society still requires financial donations.

Logistics

Outcome: The local logistics capacity of the Bolivian Red Cross to respond is strengthened with technical support for local procurement.	
Outputs	Activities planned
Enhanced logistics capacity and technical support to facilitate the procurement and distribution of relief items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical support for the local procurement process of 2,000 hygiene kits, jerry cans and food parcels, as well as 1,000 impregnated mosquito nets. • Deploy (if required) a logistics IFRC staff to support procurement processes.

Progress: As the National Society went through a local procurement process within last's year appeal and the experience is fresh within the organization, no new technical support from the IFRC's Logistics Service has been required thus far.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The communications department of the BRC has been keen in disseminating information on the National Society's plan and activities. The department has been successful with radio and printed press, with interviews to the President of the BRC and articles being published in media of wide circulation in the city of La Paz. The initiative taken by the communication staff has developed into a close bi-directional working relationship with journalists who now seek the National Society for updates on their achievements. To complement this strategy, the department also updates the information on the organization's web site.

There is also a close partnership with the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Network for Health Programme Coordination (Red de Programas de Coordinación en Salud) with whom the National Society exchanges information and had provided details on their plan of action in response to the emergency. Finally, the BRC is also in constant communication with the IFRC emergency communications officer based in Panama to establish support mechanisms for the current operation.

Contact information

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

- **Bolivian Red Cross:** Dr. Abel Peña y Lillo, President of the Bolivian Red Cross; email: secretaria@cruzrojaboliviana.org; phone (5912) 220 2934/ 212 9225; fax (5912) 235 9102.
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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.

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2. Enable healthy and safe living.
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