

Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Guatemala: Earthquake

DREF operation n° MDRGT004 GLIDE n° [EQ-2012-000188-GTM](#) 12 November 2012

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.

309,147 Swiss francs have been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) in delivering immediate assistance to some 6,000 beneficiaries (1,000 families)¹. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: On 7 November an earthquake of magnitude 7.2 occurred off the northwestern Guatemalan coast. Although assessments are still ongoing, the government estimates that more than 1,200,000 persons

were affected and 5,251 left homeless. Currently 50 deaths have been reported,

while 24 people are still missing. The government of Guatemala declared a State of Calamity on 7 November for the departments of Retalhuleu, Quetzaltenango, Sololá, Quiché, Totonicapán, San Marcos, and Huehuetenango.

An institutional red alert was declared by the National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction (Coordinadora Nacional de Reducción de Desastres, CONRED) in Guatemala and the Guatemalan Red Cross mobilized its emergency teams for search and rescue operations, evacuation of people from risk areas, pre-hospital care, and damage and needs assessments. The current DREF-supported operation will assist with more detailed assessments in order to better understand the scope of the damage to homes and buildings, as well as to provide support for the distribution of relief items to some 450 families, of which 300 will be assisted with temporary shelter solutions. In addition, the National Society is also



On 7 November a 7.4 magnitude earthquake was felt in Guatemala, affecting several areas, in particular San Marcos where several buildings collapsed.
Source: Guatemalan Red Cross

¹ The average family in the affected area is made up of 6 people.

assisting with pre-hospital care, psychosocial support, violence prevention, nutritional good practices, safe water, and epidemic control for 1,000 families.

This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will therefore be completed by 7 February 2013; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 7 May 2013).

[<click here for the DREF budget;](#)
[here for contact details;](#)
[here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

An earthquake of 7.2 on the Richter scale occurred on 7 November at 10:35 hours local time off the coast of Guatemala, near the border with México, at some 56 km (35 miles) South-South West of Retalhuleu, Guatemala. By 16:30 hours, over 19 aftershocks had been registered by the National Institute of Seismology, Vulcanology, Meteorology and Hydrology (Instituto Nacional de Sismología, Vulcanología, Meteorología y Hidrología, INSIVUMEH).

Initial reports from CONRED indicate that the worst hit areas are the departments of San Marcos, the coast of Quetzaltenango, Retalhuleu, Sololá, Totonicapán, South Quiché, and South Huehuetenango. Authorities are working to confirm the situation regarding 24 persons reported as missing; however, 50 deaths have already been reported. Although first assessments are ongoing and the situation is still unclear, CONRED estimates that more than 1,250,000 persons were affected and that some 6 million people could be at risk. Thus far, 2,263 homes with different levels of damage have been assessed, and 5,251 persons are reported as homeless, of which 900 are sheltered in collective centres.

The following tables summarize the figures provided by CONRED as of 8 November, 07:40 hours:

No. of persons						
Affected	Severely affected	Evacuated	In collective centres	Missing	Injured	Fatalities
1,249,781	5,251	2,966	900	24	14	50

No. of houses			
At risk	Light damage	Moderate damage	Severe damage
180	538	991	554

Affected infrastructure	Roads		Bridges		Schools		Buildings	
	Affected	Destroyed	Affected	Destroyed	Affected	Destroyed	Affected	Destroyed
	12	1	2	1	6	0	7	2

There are concerns that the aftershocks could worsen the situation and increase the number of collapsed structures. Telephone lines and electricity have also been severely affected. Initially, the Ministry of Energy and Mines reported that 73,000 people were without electricity; however, 95 per cent of the electricity service has already been reestablished.

Through Governmental Decree No. 3-2012, the President of Guatemala declared a State of Calamity on 7 November for the departments of Retalhuleu, Quetzaltenango, Sololá, Quiché, Totonicapán, San Marcos, and Huehuetenango.

Water and Sanitation: the potable water system that supplies San Marcos incurred some damage to the distribution pipes, but not to reservoir tanks and water sources. Therefore, there is a lack of access to safe water in some areas, and others are receiving services intermittently. Authorities estimate that the service can be reestablished in a week; however, this information could change as assessment of damage is still ongoing as regards underground pipes.

The lack of water is also affecting the disposal of excreta as home systems depend on the supply from water pipes. Given the urban context and the density of population, preventive and educational measures on personal hygiene and safe handling of food will need to be boosted. The Fire Department is distributing water in some areas of the city of San Marcos, but the activity will need to be increased in order to cover the

current needs of the population and avoid an increment in water related diseases. Therefore, water treatment facilities will be set up near water sources so that water can then be distributed with the support of trucks. The Guatemalan Red Cross will work in coordination with the government authorities to have a better understanding of the length of time that the water treatment plant will be needed.

Emergency Health: the health infrastructures in the region were not severely affected and there are reports of minor non-structural damages; hospitals have been able to continue with the provision of services. There was a surge in the need for health services for trauma treatment just after the earthquake which temporarily overwhelmed the capacities, however, the numbers of requests for health services are currently stabilizing and there is no need for the activation of Red Cross global tools.

The National Society's health team has assessed that the main health risk is related to the low temperatures that could result in an increase of respiratory diseases, particularly since many people fear seeking warmth and shelter inside because of the continuation of aftershocks. However, this situation is expected to gradually return to normality. Another element that will need to be monitored is the possibility of worsening chronic malnutrition among children under five due to the poor post earthquake food security situation. However, the government's public health system has two programmes in place (Hambre Zero and Ventana 1000 Dias) that include micronutrient distributions and growth-monitoring. As food provision has been identified as a priority by the government of Guatemala, part of the first humanitarian aid shipment was made up of food. The World Food Program has at its disposal an inventory of 1,225 tons of food that could be used if required; shipments with fortified biscuits can be dispatched from El Salvador as needed. Food distributions are being conducted by the authorities.

The losses suffered by many families after earthquake and the fear of new events requires an increase in psychological first aid and psychosocial support to assist with the processing of emotions related to the event, particularly in the collective centres sheltering the families that lost their homes.

Shelter and community: the majority of recent construction in the affected areas is made of cement and steel reinforcements that resisted the earthquake. Approximately 90 per cent of the damaged homes assessed by the Guatemalan Red Cross were older constructions made of adobe without reinforcements. The main damage beyond total collapse is fractured walls and broken windows, and many houses will be unable to withstand another strong earthquake. As is often the case, the full assessment of damage is only possible after a close inspection inside homes, resulting in a slow process.

In the case of collective centres, a significant percentage of the population is made up of women and children, possibly due to the fact that men are staying in their homes for fear of losing their possessions. According to information from different international and governmental sources, the population in collective centres is not living in them permanently, as they prefer to try to repair the damage to their homes and protect their personal property, thus spending only a certain time in the shelter during the day or night.

Context of the affected area: There are migrant populations in the area hit by the earthquake made up of people from other Central American countries as well as internally displaced people living in the affected communities. San Marcos is on the border with Mexico and there is much migration across the border, especially at this time of the year. According to Guatemala's Ministry of Health and Welfare, migration in the country mobilizes approximately one million people annually. This is usually a result of the population searching for better opportunities and living conditions. However, migrants often find themselves vulnerable and exposed to risks and health threats. A report from the Ministry of Health and Welfare indicated that the most frequent diseases which affect migrants and their families are: 1. respiratory infections, 2. intestinal parasites, 3. tonsillitis, 4. diarrhoea, 5. peptic disease, 6. Anaemia; 7. pneumonia 8. skin diseases; 9. amoebas; 10. malnutrition.

Indigenous communities of Guatemala belong to the Garifuna, Mayan and Xinca ethnic groups. The Mayan population is made up of 4 dominant groups: K'iche', Q'echi', Kaqchikel and Mam. The largest indigenous populations in the country are in the north and west of Guatemala City, in particular in the departments of Quiché, Alta and Baja Verapaz, Sololá, Totonicapán, Huehuetenango and San Marcos. Although indigenous communities are moving to urban centres, most of the indigenous populations live in rural communities. Rural families work as farmers, cultivating corn and beans on one or several plots of land (milpa). The land is held and farmed individually but overall forms part of the community's ancestral collective property. The decision making structure takes place at village level through a community decision making body to solve issues of land rights, disputes and so on. As land has poor soil quality and no irrigation systems are available, production from the milpas is not usually sufficient to support the family throughout the year. Many families keep livestock and work as seasonal labourers in sugar cane and coffee plantations close to the coastline.

Another topic of concern in the San Marcos area is that of personal security which is an important factor limiting development. The nation of Guatemala has one of the highest homicide rates in Latin America.

Coordination and partnerships

The Guatemalan Red Cross maintains constant coordination with CONRED, and members of the National Society are included within the National Emergency Operations Centres. Through this coordinating structure, the National Society exchanges information with all the different institutions involved in the response at national level. The coordination of the response is led by CONRED with the participation of the following organizations: Action against Hunger (ACF), ACT Alliance, CARE, Cooperazione Italiana (COOPI), Mercy Corps, OXFAM, Plan International, World Vision, ECHO, Médecins Sans Frontières, as well as the Guatemalan Red Cross, the IFRC and other Partner National Societies in country.

The GRC and IFRC have been coordinating since the beginning of the emergency and response operation, with the IFRC country coordinator joining the discussions and analysis with the National Society. An emergency health delegate and a disaster management delegate from the Disaster and Crisis Response and Early Recovery Unit have been deployed to Guatemala to support the damage and needs assessments. In addition, the unit's virtual EOC was activated to support meetings between the National Society, the secretariat and Partner National Societies. The IFRC Regional Intervention Team (RIT) system and the IFRC global Emergency Response Unit (ERU) system were put on alert in order to ensure immediate deployment, but the need for the latter did not arise.



Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Guatemalan Red Cross declared a red alert and activated its volunteers to provide support in search and rescue actions in collapsed or damaged homes, pre-hospital care and psychological first aid, as well as in damage and needs assessments.

Overall, 1,242 volunteers from 20 branches nationwide have implemented actions as per their contingency plans and in accordance with established procedures designed to safeguard the lives of vulnerable people. The volunteers are composed of

A base camp to coordinate all Red Cross response activities has been established in San Marcos. Source: Guatemalan Red Cross

specialized National Intervention Teams (ENI) in the areas of:

- Water and sanitation, hygiene promotion and health in emergencies
- Pre-hospital care
- Damage assessment and needs analysis
- Search and rescue
- Management of emergency operations centres
- Management of temporary shelters
- Management of humanitarian aid.

The National Society has also begun activities to provide preventive messages to the general population through press releases, radio spots and the social media. The messages cover different topics from measures to reduce the loss of life in the event of future earthquakes to personal hygiene.

To assist families, the GRC dispatched emergency relief items to the affected areas from its pre-positioned stocks, while more volunteers specialized in psychosocial support were deployed to the affected area. Additionally, a helicopter has been contracted to complete rapid aerial assessments.

It must also be mentioned that two branches of the GRC were also affected by the earthquake. The branch in San Marcos was severely damaged and the staff and volunteers were prompted to evacuate the building, while in Serchil damage to a septic tank has affected branch operations. To better coordinate the emergency response, and given the damage incurred, a base camp was set up in San Marcos and its emergency operations centre is managing the information received from all technical experts.

The needs

Selection of people to be reached: at the moment, actions are focused on saving lives through search and rescue and pre-hospital care, as well as assisting affected families. As the area where the earthquake struck is mountainous and with fairly low temperatures at this time of the year, blankets and warm shelter will be another immediate necessity, as well as action aimed at reducing the risk of diseases. Families will be selected from those who have incurred severe damage to houses and livelihoods, and with large numbers of *children; disabled people; elderly people or single female-headed households and migrants* –who have no possibility of support from family or relatives and lack insurance. As the San Marcos area has a large indigenous community (Maya, Garífuna and Xinca), special attention will be made to include all components of society in the emergency operations under this DREF.

The proposed operation

The DREF-supported operation will assist with the deployment of emergency teams to the affected areas and with the damage and needs assessments being carried out by the National Society alongside the government and other humanitarian actors. In addition, the DREF will support the distribution of relief items to 450 families, of which 300 will also be assisted with shelter solutions. As an integrated approach a total of 1000 families (6.000 persons - a family is made up of an average of 6 persons) will be reached with emergency health and water and sanitation objectives.

The operation will assist with the deployment costs of the persons involved in the response while also covering the insurance of 60 Red Cross volunteers.

Relief distribution

Outcome: The Guatemalan Red Cross contributes to meet the immediate needs of 450 families in the departments of San Marcos and Quetzaltenango

Outputs and activities planned:

- Conduct emergency damage and needs assessments alongside government authorities and other humanitarian partners.
- Hire a helicopter to complete a rapid assessment of large-scale damage.
- Develop a beneficiary communication plan with affected communities to ensure their participation throughout the process.
- Develop a beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance to affected families together with affected communities and their leaders.
- Replenish pre-positioned stock used during the emergency
- Support the distribution of non food relief items to 450 families.

To support 450 affected families, the Guatemalan Red Cross will distribute hygiene kits, jerry cans, buckets and blankets. These items are integrated under the emergency health, water and sanitation objectives of the operation.

With its pre-positioned stock, the National Society is already dispatching hygiene kits, blankets and household water ceramic filters. In addition, the Emergency Appeal launched last year after Tropical Depression 12-E led to the pre-positioning of some items, and the Americas zone logistics unit has sent two containers (Tropical Mobile Support Units, TMSUs) with the following items that will support the operation as needed.

Item	Amount sent in TMSU
Hygiene Kits	960
Collapsible bottles	1,920
Light blankets	4,800
Mosquito nets	1,920
Plastic sheeting	1,920
Kitchen sets	960
Plastic buckets	960
Shelter tool kits	500

As a result, this DREF operation will support some stock replenishment, as well as the purchase other items needed to assist families in this particular emergency.

Emergency health, water and sanitation

Outcome: 6,000 persons (1,000 families) affected have access to pre-hospital care, epidemic control, a malnutrition campaign, psychosocial and violence prevention support.

Outputs and activities planned:

- Support rescue and evacuation efforts.
- Provide first aid care to the affected population and ensure referral and transfer services to health centres.
- Provide psychological first aid and psychosocial support to persons (including affected volunteers) in the San Marcos region.
- Provide violence prevention messages to communities (including affected volunteers and migrants) in affected regions.
- Conduct community training on epidemic control (main focus on acute respiratory infections) and on good nutritional practices for children under five including indigenous communities.
- Distribute safe water for affected people for at least two weeks.
- Carry out continuous assessments of water, sanitation, and the situation relating to hygiene.

The National Society has water treatment plants, including a Water and Sanitation Kit 5, as well as volunteers trained in their use; therefore the DREF will support the cost of water trucking. It must be mentioned that the Guatemalan Red Cross will follow an integrated approach, therefore, all the families mentioned in the relief distribution sector and the emergency shelter are also being targeted with the water, sanitation and health objectives.

Emergency Shelter

Outcome: 300 families with damaged houses from the areas affected by the earthquake are assisted with shelter solutions

Outputs and activities planned:

- Identify communities and specific beneficiaries in coordination with local government authorities and the community leaders.
- Deploy a RIT member specialized in emergency shelter.
- Immediately provide 300 families with shelter kits (including 2 tarpaulins each).
- Assess the feasibility of the use of a cash transfer system with the involvement of the affected communities in the planning process to support 300 families with the repair of damaged houses.
- Develop analysis mechanisms to ensure inclusion of gender and violence prevention considerations during the provision of shelter solutions.
- Carry out repairs to the National Society branches affected by the earthquake to ensure their ability to function.

Logistics

Outcome: The local logistics capacity of the Guatemalan Red Cross to respond with relief items is strengthened with the support of standardized items prepositioned in the IFRC's zone Logistics Unit in Panama as well as enhanced with technical support

Outputs	Activities planned
Enhanced logistics capacity and technical support facilitate the distribution of relief items to 1,000 families and other related activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management of logistics mobilization• Procurement of transport services through the ZLU transport network• International procurement as required.• Pipeline management of in-kind goods.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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**For Performance and Accountability
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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.

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Saving lives, changing minds.



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.

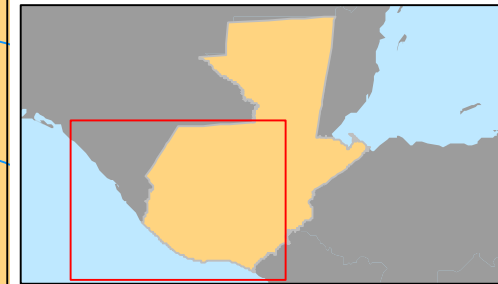
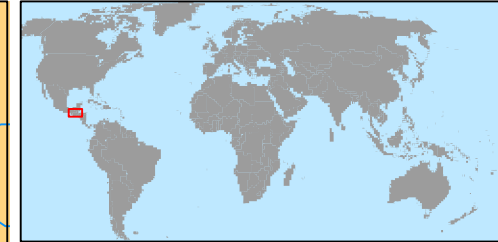
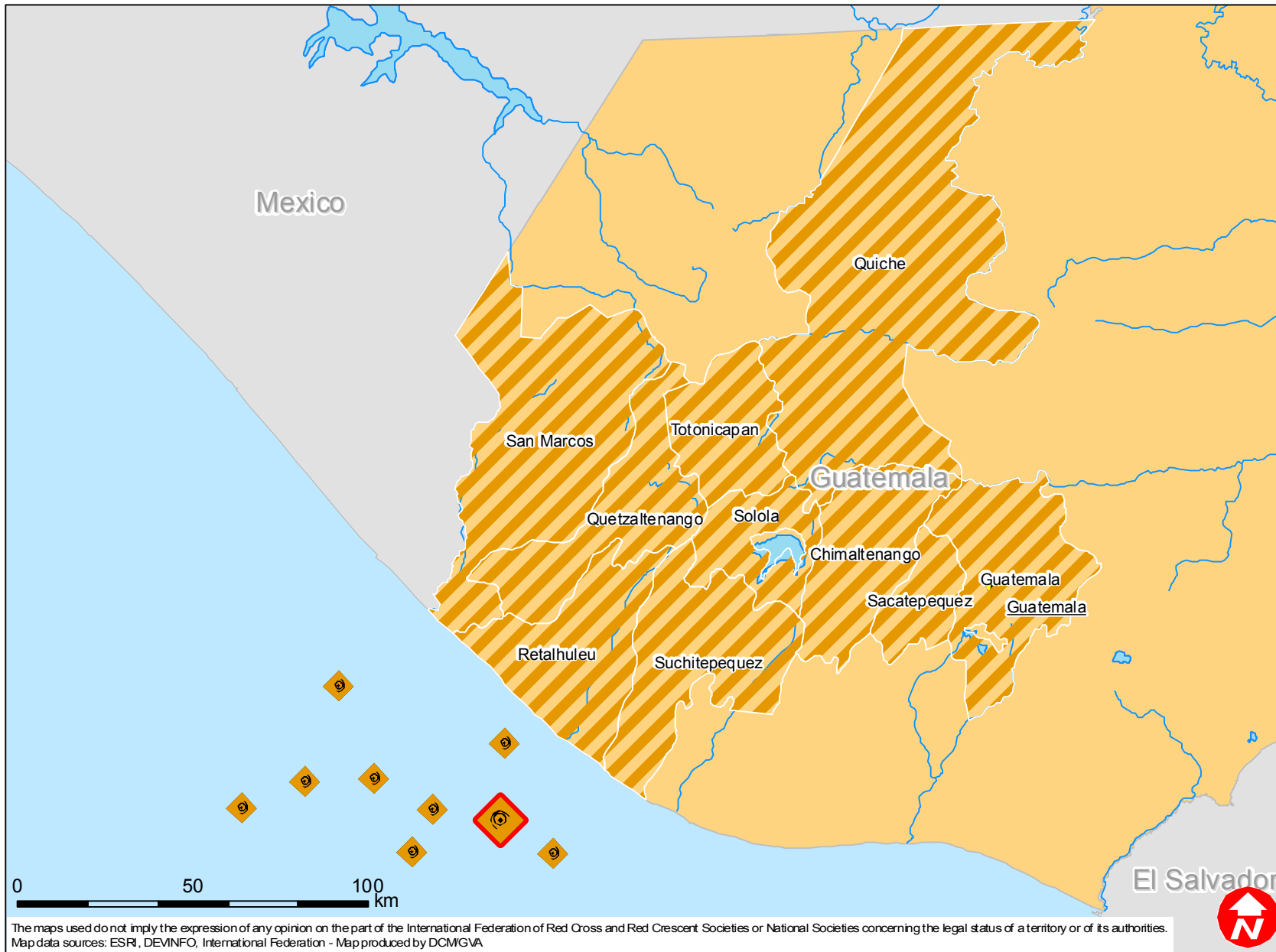
DREF OPERATION
MDRGT004 GUATEMALA EARTHQUAKE




11-07-12

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	16,417
Shelter - Transitional	120,295
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	9,435
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	13,247
Food	
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	30,994
Medical & First Aid	4,717
Teaching Materials	23,587
Utensils & Tools	5,095
Other Supplies & Services	0
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	223,786
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	
Distribution & Monitoring	8,446
Transport & Vehicle Costs	9,435
Logistics Services	2,313
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	20,194
International Staff	11,322
National Staff	2,830
National Society Staff	8,559
Volunteers	
Total PERSONNEL	22,712
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Travel	14,152
Information & Public Relations	
Office Costs	2,595
Communications	5,425
Financial Charges	1,415
Other General Expenses	
Shared Office and Services Costs	
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	23,587
Partner National Societies	
Other Partners (NGOs, UN, other)	
Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS	0
Programme and Services Support Recovery	18,868
Total INDIRECT COSTS	18,868
TOTAL BUDGET	309,147



Guatemala: Earthquake



-  Main earthquake 7.4
-  Aftershocks (between 4.3 & 5.1)
-  Affected departments

