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# Emergency Plan of Action update

## Venezuela: Civil Unrest

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

### General data

<b>DREF Operation</b>	<b>Operation n° MDRVE002; Glide n° OT-2014-00027-VEN</b>
Date of issue: 28 May 2014	<b>Date of emergency:</b> January 24 2014
<b>Operation manager:</b> Felipe Del Cid, Regional Disaster Manager-South America	<b>Point of contact in the National Society:</b> Gisela Ginnari, Venezuela Red Cross
<b>Operation start date:</b> February 17 2014	<b>Expected timeframe:</b> Extended from 3 to 4.5 months, 25 February to 9 July 2014
<b>Overall operation budget:</b> 63,852 Swiss francs	
<b>Number of people affected:</b> not applicable	<b>Number of people to be assisted:</b> Increased readiness of 6 branches of the Venezuelan Red Cross
<b>Host National Society:</b> Venezuelan Red Cross	
<b>Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation:</b> ICRC	

**Summary of revisions made to emergency plan of action:** 57,238 Swiss francs were allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to increase the Venezuelan Red Cross (VRC) capacity to provide first aid.

With this operations update, the budget has been increased to 63,852 Swiss francs (an additional 6,614 Swiss francs) to support monitoring visits and the implementation timeframe has been extended for an additional 6 weeks. The time extension aims in assisting the National Society in closing the operation in a coordinated manner and allowing the introduction in the country of all replenished items purchased internationally.

The IFRC, on behalf of the National Society, would like to thank the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) for their generous contribution to replenish the allocation made to this operation.

The major donors and partners of DREF include the Australian, American and Belgian governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and government, Danish Red Cross and government, ECHO, the Irish and the Italian governments, the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Luxembourg government, the Monaco Red Cross and government, the Netherlands Red Cross and government, the Norwegian Red Cross and government, the Spanish Government, the Swedish Red Cross and government, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Medtronic and Z Zurich Foundations, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the national society, would like to thank all for their generous contributions.

<http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/responding/disaster-response-system/financial-instruments/disaster-relief-emergency-fund-dref/>



Group discussion on Safer Access addressed to staff of the Venezuela Red Cross headquarters in Caracas. Source: IFRC

## A. Situation analysis

### Description of the disaster

Since 11 February 2014, demonstrations in several parts of Venezuela were reported. According to the Venezuelan government, the civil unrest left behind 42 casualties and 835 injured people in several cities. Concentrations of primarily students have been increasing forcing stores to close temporarily. Some of the cities are reporting demonstrations were Caracas, Valencia, Barquisimeto, Maracaibo and San Cristobal among others.

The operation requires a six week extension, aimed at completing international procurements made through the Global Logistics Services (GLS) of the IFRC, as the operation faced serious challenges to replenish the used items inside the country.

### Summary of current response

#### Overview of Host National Society

In preparation for the current crisis, the Venezuelan Red Cross (VRC), with support from the ICRC, developed a contingency plan for these events. The plan has been activated and all the VRC branches are currently in alert and are responding to assist people who require Red Cross services, according to the seven Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Movement (RCRCM). All the VRC branches have been in constant coordination and communication with the National Society headquarter office in Caracas, reporting all actions that have been carried out to date. The VRC has 24 branches throughout the country:

Amazonas	Anzoátegui	Apure
Aragua	Barinas	Bolivar
Carabobo	Cojedes	Distrito Capital
Falcón	Guárico	Lara
Mérida	Miranda	Monagas
Nueva Esparta	Portuguesa	Sucre
Delta Amacuro	Táchira	Trujillo
Vargas	Yaracuy	Zulia

Source: Venezuela Red Cross

The National Society maintains active Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) in different branches and are generating situation reports that are shared with Red Cross Movement members.

Branches have volunteer teams equipt with:

- A complete first aid kit
- Protective equipment uniforms in accordance to national VRC policies
- A stretcher
- A 2 x 2 flag
- Triage Format Book
- Others items indicated by the Directorate of Health

The Venezuelan Red Cross has provided first aid to some 145 people, including breathing problems and injuries. Nationally more than 1,225 volunteers are supporting relief efforts across the country.

#### Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The Venezuelan Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the ICRC have been closely coordinating contributions to implement the Contingency Plan and communicating about the actions

that each of the components of the Movement can carry out to assist the VRC to respond as effectively as it can in accordance to its capacity and the enhancements from Movement partners.

The ICRC has supported the Venezuelan Red Cross through training in Safer Access and continues to provide practical field skill to response teams to enhance safe and efficient actions during disturbances. They are providing technical advice to the directorates of the National Society while the IFRC supports the plan of action of this DREF operation. During the implementation of the DREF project, several coordination meeting between the ICRC and the IFRC have been held in order to harmonize the Movement actions undertaken in the country. The ICRC has provided support to the IFRC and the VRC for the introduction of items purchased internationally in support of the prioritized branches.

Additionally, the ICRC is collaborating with the VRC to pre-position medical and surgical materials in six priority branches for medical care centres and, if required, emergency response teams of the National Society. The project includes technical assistance in logistics management, evaluation of medical needs in health centres, and harmonization of procedures for first-aid in case of emergencies.

### **Needs analysis and scenario planning**

Demonstrations are generating demand from the Venezuelan Red Cross services, and consequently increasing the need for supplies such as first aid equipment, personal protection equipment, visibility material for volunteers, branches functioning and vehicles. Moreover, to continue strengthening the implementation of safer access standards in all actions is essential to enhance staff and volunteers protection. This can be done through trainings on safer access at branches level.

With the current situation in the country, it is difficult to estimate when an agreement will be reached. Therefore, the ICRC and the International Federation have been supporting the replacement of equipment and materials, as well as to continue providing capacity building on safer access and stay safe, to ensure that the National Society is able to meet the demand for services in the coming months if needed.

Due to the current uncertainty about the social and economic situation in the country, the project execution could be affected as road blockades can delay the delivery of the purchased equipment to the branches. The security conditions are an important factor in the operation. They must be considered when performing all of the activities proposed in the plan of action.

## **B. Operational strategy and plan**

### **Overall Objective**

Providing emergency health services to people requiring first aid assistance in the most affected municipalities in the country.

### **Proposed strategy**

With the support of the DREF operation, the VRC is strengthening its response teams to provide first aid in areas of confrontation. The DREF operation is ensuring that volunteers have access to protective and visibility material, first aid kits, and training in Safer Access Framework (SAF), while also providing staff and volunteers with psychosocial support.

The project is coordinated by the National Relief Program of the Venezuelan Red Cross which is responsible for planning, executing, monitoring and directing all activities related to planning and preparing for emergencies. They guide the processes of risk management and humanitarian aid strengthening, along with all components of the Movement, and strengthens the response capacities in coordination with the National Disaster Direction and other components of the National Society when required. The National Relief Direction is the executive organ of the Relief Program in the country.

### **Operational support services**

#### **Human resources**

From 25 February to 31 March 2014, 1,225 volunteers supported relief actions in the country providing 5,040 hours of volunteer work in first aid, as well as monitoring the situation in emergency operations centres in their respective branches. The IFRC is providing technical support to the National Society through the country representative, as well as

through PADRU's disaster management delegate and technical staff, all of them maintaining close coordination with the National Relief Director, the Secretary General and President of the VRC.

### Logistics and supply chain

At the launch of the DREF supported operation, international purchases or transfers of equipment from other countries were not planned. Instead, the National Society was going to replenish all items used through the local market in accordance with standard policies and procedures of the International Federation.

However, it became evident that many products could not be found in the country. As a result, the IFRC GLS was called to assist with the procurement of helmets and first aid kits for the branches, while some first aid basic items have been acquired in the country to restock the VRC branches.

### Security

All activities that occur in response to relief needs will be conducted in accordance with the rules and safety protocols of the Venezuelan Red Cross and following the seven pillars for safer access. Safety standards are being shared by the headquarters office with its branches and they will be of strict compliance. Sessions to increase the understanding of these standards are being provided in all the branches to improve the knowledge of all staff working in ambulance services, medical services, administration, communications and other areas of work of the National Society. All national and international staff and volunteers must meet the communication protocol established by the Venezuelan Red Cross, respecting always the safety standards.

This DREF operation will support several of these measures, supporting with visibility and protection materials, and training addressed to volunteers and staff on safer access.

Currently, security incidents to vehicles or personnel of the Venezuelan Red Cross have not occurred. However, application of safer access standards continues at all times to guarantee safety during the relief operations conducted by the volunteers. In addition, 800 VRC volunteers are covered by the IFRC insurance for volunteers.

### Communications

In regards to security protocols established in the Contingency Plan of the VRC and according to safer access standards, the following communication guidelines were established:

- Official information will only be disclosed by the President of the Venezuelan Red Cross, or the Secretary General, or the person (s) they designate as spokesperson (s).
- The National Dissemination Direction, based on the context analysis conducted by the Branches Dissemination Directors, makes recommendations to the spokesperson (s) on the external communication plan (press lines, press releases, statements for spokesmen (key messages) or others).
- The external communications plan is shared with representatives of the International Movement of the Red Cross.
- Messages are distributed to local radios including messages on the emblem and the Fundamental Principles.

All communication activities being undertaken by the National Society, are reactive instead of proactive, in compliance with the RCRC Fundamental Principles, and the communication strategy developed by the VRC with support from the IFRC and the ICRC. In the first instance, the National Society is using the website <http://www.cruzrojavenezolana.org/>

### Planning, monitoring, evaluation, & reporting (PMER)

PADRU's Disaster Management Regional Delegate, and technical staff, as well as the country representative have travelled on more than once occasion to Venezuela to conduct field visit and support the coordination of the plan of action. However, due to changes and challenges in the acquisition of protective and visibility equipment, an update report was not issued in the first 40 days as planned.

## C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

### Health & care

**Needs analysis:** Demand of pre-hospital care services increased as manifestations in the country occur. The replenishment of first aid supplies and the provision of more materials for service continuity is essential to respond to the increasing needs to provide first aid to the population. To provide assistance, the VRC volunteering requires more visibility and protection materials such as shoes, helmets, flags and vests as many attentions are given near the areas of

concentrations. Refreshment on the seven pillars of safer access to all personnel involved in the operation is essential to reduce the risks at the time of relief actions carried out daily by the VRC.

**Population to be assisted:** After the launch of the DREF operation, the VRC alongside the IFRC and the ICRC carried out a new analysis of the branch capacities and of the incident rate in different areas of the country. As a result, it was decided to prioritize six branches of the VRC instead of twelve: Caracas, Valencia, Zulia, Lara, Mérida and Táchira. These branches will be received most of the first aid restocking and safety equipment. However, some materials will remain repositioned at headquarters to support other branches as needed, depending on the evolution of the unrest.

<b>Health and Care</b>			
<b>Outcome:</b> The immediate risks to the health of affected populations are reduced.	<b>Outputs</b>		<b>% of achievement</b>
	Output 1.1 Target population is provided with rapid medical management of injuries and diseases.		100%
	Output 1.2 Psychosocial support provided to mobilized volunteers.		60%
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Is implementation on time?</b>		<b>% progress</b>
	Yes	No	
Pre-hospital care to injured population	x		100%
First aid kits addressed to 12 branches	x		100%
Three workshops on psychosocial support for volunteers		x	33%
Psychosocial care to volunteers by a / an expert		x	0%
Development of the Plan of Action to respond to the emergency	x		100%
Elaboration of progress reports	x		80%
Monitoring visits to the emergency sites by the NS Relief Direction	x		70%
Purchase of personal protective materials for volunteers (helmets, shoes, raincoats)	x		100%
Purchase of visibility materials for volunteers	x		100%
Maintenance and repairing of vehicles		x	0%
4 workshops on Safer Access for the VRC volunteers and staff	x		100%
Lessons learnt workshop	x		0%
<b>Progress towards Outcomes</b>			
With support of the DREF operation, including cash donations at national level, a total of 1,225 volunteers in the country were able to continue their activities providing assistance in the field, with at least 145 people receiving first aid care and staffing in several emergency operation centres. The volunteers, who have provided some 5,040 hours of work were assisted with transportation, food, insurance and refresher course on safer access.			

### Psychosocial Support:

The VRC health focal point presented a work plan for a regional workshop for the prioritized branches. This plan included training in psychosocial support to 11 volunteers from Merida, Zulia, Tachira, Carabobo and Lara-Valencia branches; who will be responsible for making replicas in their respective branches.

Psychosocial support care to the VRC volunteers has not been provided, however identification of cases and care is expected to occur with the support of volunteers trained at the regional workshop.

### Safer Access:

In January, the ICRC organized a national , Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on Safer Access and subsequently participants conducted replicas in their respective branches. As part of the DREF operation, an online training session on Safer Access for the VRC headquarters administrative staff was carried out with 25 participants.

The six branches being supported by the operation had prepositioned first aid materials that are being used by the volunteers in the field. At the start of the operation, the plan was to replenish most of the material at national level; however, due to high costs and scarcity only some supplies were purchased locally (gauze, disinfectant, alcohol, bandages, masks and gloves) and distributed to the prioritized branches. Most of the other supplies (10 kits to assist 75 people each and 70 helmets) including the provision of new protective equipment has been procured through the IFRC's GLS internationally. Also, most of the visibility materials (200 vests, 70 helmets and 50 flags) will be bought in Peru from the Peruvian Red Cross suppliers to facilitate the introduction in the country and subsequent distribution. Although vests are already in the country and distributed to branches as a protective measure, many of the other items to be replenished are still being introduced, prompting the six week extension request.



Volunteers attending the regional psychosocial support workshop in order to provide further assistance in affected areas. Source: VRC



Given the new implementation timeframe, the planned lessons learned workshop will be held on the last week of June 2014. National Directors of the VRC involved in the operation will attend. At the end of the project, it is expected to count with final figures on replicas of safer access and psychological first aid workshops made at the VRC branch level.

The IFRC will deploy the regional disaster management delegate to support the NS in the closing of the operation of financial and narrative reports.

### Challenges

During project implementation several major challenges on the exchange rate were found. Currency devaluation generated product costs overruns and a consequent shortage in the country.<sup>1</sup> As a result, a number of products had

<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of the operation the exchange rate was Bs 6.00 per 1.00 US dollar, while the parallel market trading rate was Bs. 80.00 per 1.00 US dollar.

an significant increase in price versus initial budget (for example, a simple vest was costing as much as 75.00 US dollars) Because of this situation, the VRC accepted the proposal of the IFRC to purchase most of the medical supplies and protective equipment through the Global Logistics Services (GLS). International purchases included: first aid kits, bags for first aid equipment, helmets, vests and banners of VRC.

Similarly, the shortage of parts and high costs halted the vehicle and ambulance repairs. Therefore, it was coordinated with the ICRC the possibility to reallocate the vehicle repairs funds of the DREF to more visibility materials (jackets and t-shirts for volunteer) while the ICRC will consider covering vehicle repair costs, particularly with repair times possibly exceeding the DREF operation timeline.

At the completion of this report, the Bolivarian Government of Venezuela had authorized a second modality of change: Bs. 50.00 per 1.00 US dollar. This measure has reduced the financial pressure over the project.

### For further information specifically related to this report, please contact:

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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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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**

26-May-14

MDRVE002 Venezuela - Civil Unrest

<b>Budget Group</b>	<b>DREF Grant Budget CHF</b>
Shelter - Relief	0
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Housing	0
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	0
Food	0
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Medical & First Aid	12,243
Teaching Materials	0
Utensils & Tools	0
Other Supplies & Services	0
Cash Disbursements	0
<b>Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLI</b>	<b>12,243</b>
Land & Buildings	0
Vehicles	0
Computer & Telecom Equipment	0
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	0
Medical Equipment	0
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
<b>Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>0</b>
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	0
Transport & Vehicle Costs	8,872
Logistics Services	0
<b>Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE</b>	<b>8,872</b>
International Staff	0
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	710
Volunteers	11,846
Other Staff Benefits	4,436
<b>Total PERSONNEL</b>	<b>16,992</b>
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
<b>Total CONSULTANTS &amp; PROFESSIONAL FEES</b>	<b>0</b>
Workshops & Training	4,436
<b>Total WORKSHOP &amp; TRAINING</b>	<b>4,436</b>
Travel	8,872
Information & Public Relations	4,880
Office Costs	1,331
Communications	1,530
Financial Charges	798
Other General Expenses	0
Shared Office and Services Costs	0
<b>Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>17,411</b>
Partner National Societies	0
Other Partners (NGOs, UN, other)	0
<b>Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme and Services Support Recovery	3,897
<b>Total INDIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>3,897</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>63,852</b>