

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Venezuela: floods

Emergency appeal n° MDRVE001
GLIDE n° FL-2010-00240-VEN
Operations update n° 1
13 May 2011

Period covered by this Ops Update: 1 January to 23 March 2011. The financial report reflects expenditure up to the end March 2011.

Appeal target (current): 717,571 Swiss francs.

Appeal coverage: 77%; [<click here to go directly to the updated donor response report, or here to link to contact details >](#)

Appeal history:

- A Preliminary Emergency Appeal for 429,887 Swiss francs was launched on 21 December 2010 to support 2,000 families over 6 months.
- An Emergency Appeal for 717,571 Swiss francs was launched on 29 December 2010 increasing the support to 2,500 families
- This Operations update reflects an extension of the implementation timeframe to 9 months, and the operation will now conclude by the end of September 2011.



Twenty-three participants from different Venezuelan Red Cross branches were trained in psychosocial support techniques that will be used to assist the affected population. Source: VRC

Summary:

Due to unavoidable administrative delays, the relief operation was delayed however the Venezuelan Red Cross (VRC) started the procurement process to locally acquire the hygiene and cleaning kits and is currently completing the identification of target families. The National Society has also assessed the health situation within collective centres and completed a psychosocial support training for volunteers. In addition, informative materials for health, hygiene and sanitation promotion have begun to be printed. Due to the evolving situation in Venezuela, the timeframe of the operation has been extended, adding three months to the original plan, to allow the VRC to complete their activities. The operation will therefore be completed by September 2011. In line with the IFRC's reporting standards, the final report (narrative and financial) is due 90 days after the end of the operation (by December 2011).

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is thankful to the following private companies, Partner National Societies and governments for their kind support to the Appeal: the Brazilian government; the Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian government; Chevron Texaco Corporation; the Japanese Red Cross; and the Swedish Red Cross and the Swedish government.

The situation

The climatic phenomenon of La Niña disrupted the weather patterns in Venezuela just as in many other countries in the region, causing extremely severe rains in late November and early December 2010. This resulted in major floods and landslides across the country, prompting the declaration of a state of emergency by the Venezuelan government in the estates of Falcón, Miranda, Vargas, Merida, Zulia, Trujillo, Nueva Esparta and the Caracas Metropolitan area. Official figures in December established that 31,600 families were affected, with 124,000 people staying in 851 collective centres.

On 18 January 2011, the Venezuelan government issued the new “Special Law of Decent Shelter to Protect the Population in Case of Emergency or Disaster” (Ley Especial de Refugios Dignos para Proteger a la Población en Casos de Emergencias o Desastres). This law regulates the construction, equipment and organization of collective centres for an integral management. It also instigates the respect of human dignity, community organization, as well as rights and responsibilities of the population. The government took the responsibility to directly attend to the food, health and educational needs of affected population. The new law also creates a classification system for collective centres based on different criteria that includes the size of the population residing in a specific area, the material of the shelter structure, the type of administration (civil, military, etc.), and the length of estimated stay of the population or the duration of the structure. In addition, the Venezuelan government promised to build two million homes in two years, partly to resolve the situation of the families affected during the floods, as well as those living in areas of high risk in the country.

Three months after the event, VRC volunteers have witnessed many families that have returned to their homes or are staying with family and friends, while others are still staying in the collective centres operated by the government. As official numbers on the current situation are not always available, the estimation of the current population in different types of emergency shelters vary, approximately 25,149 people are residing in them in the five states where the VRC is working as shown by the table below:

State	Affected Families	No. of Adults	No. of Children	No. Emergency Shelter				
				Permanent	Temporal	Hotels	Military bases	Total
Central District	323	967	299	n/a	n/a	12	n/a	50
Vargas	2,925	2,602	8,775	14	63	22	0	99
Miranda	n/a	8,239*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	66
Zulia	250	1,072*	n/a	0	6	0	3	9
Falcón	676	3,195*	n/a	67	17	7	3	94

* This number indicates the total of affected people as there is no age discrimination in the data

The permanent and temporal categories in the table are based on the classification created by the new law. Permanent shelter refers to single-family spaces in either public or private structures, with an estimated stay of up to 2 years, while the temporary shelters are multi-familial spaces in public or private structures.

Based on visits carried out by volunteers, and their conversations with the managers of collective centres and other authorities, the situation in the five states where the VRC is working is the following:

- The situation in Caracas, **Central District** is that there is no official information on how many emergency shelters are open and the exact number of people residing in them. However, there are families staying in shopping centres and government ministries' buildings. Newspapers inform that there are complaints about the lack of privacy, drinking water, lavatories as well as delays in the provision of food. Managers of the collective centres informed the volunteers that some affected families residing in hotels complain about lack of sufficient drinking water. However, the larger emergency shelters count with kindergartens and communal recreational areas.
- In the **State of Vargas**, by the end of February there was an increase of the affected population residing in collective centres as the government moved part of the affected families from the capital city of Caracas due to the lack of sufficient space. Contrary to the situation in other states, the majority of the families do not wish to return to their homes or search for other alternatives after the government announced their intent to supply homes. Of the affected population accounted for, 12 per cent are still living in family tents and open spaces, while 88 per cent are staying in permanent or temporal shelters,

as well as hotels. Two of these shelters are being managed by the VRC as part of the emergency plan managed by the Maiquetia International Airport Institute under the orders of the Ministry of Transportation and Communication.

- The situation in the **State of Miranda** is as follows, some families have returned to their homes or are now residing with family or friends. At present, there are 66 collective centres located in hotels and provincial government's storehouses where they are receiving food and water in rations.
- The situation in the **State of Zulia**, the population in collective centres has decreased significantly with many families returning to their homes or moving in with friends and family. Those still living in collective centres are receiving rations of food and water.
- The situation in the **State of Falcón**, the population in the temporal collective centres has decreased as many have been moved to what the government classifies as permanent emergency shelters. All shelters are monitored by members from different government ministries as well as by the military.

There are also some socio-economic and political developments in the country that could impact the operation. There are shortages of some products, including food and non-food items like milk, oil, shampoo and feminine pads. Finally, volunteers of the VRC are also mobilizing to provide medical assistance to an increased number of university students on strike.

Coordination and partnerships

The Executive branch of the government, through the ministries, the armed forces and the civil protection agency, is the coordinating body for the response nationwide. Since the onset of the emergency, the VRC has worked with the Executive branch, provincial's governments, major's offices, the armed forces, civil society groups and private companies. In the particular case of the state of Vargas, the National Society is located in the Maiquetía International Airport Institute, and working alongside them to manage two of the five collective centres under the institute's control. The VRC Vargas branch also is also coordinating with other governmental entities such as the Niño Simón Regional Foundation (Fundación Regional Niño Simón), the Health Regional Directorate (Dirección Regional de Salud), the Fire Department, Fudalavial 171 and the Comprehensive Defence Zone (Zona de Defensa Integral). In the State of Zulia, the National Society is also working alongside the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) who are monitoring the ongoing conflict between landowners and the government.

National Society Capacity Building:

With the support of emergency appeal the Lara branch of the National Society, who is charge of managing this operation, hired a general coordinator and a financial officer. Both of them received training on the IFRC's procedures and are involved in the activities completed thus far.

In addition, the staff of the Lara branch trained 23 representatives from 18 branches on psychosocial support techniques. Those trained will now replicate the training in their own states to further extend the capacity of the National Society. In addition, to take advantage of the opportunity of having representatives of different branches, the Lara staff also opened a space to discuss the following topics of organizational development:

achievements reached during the Strategy 2010; the Strategy 2020, its main goals and anticipated effects.



The Venezuelan Red Cross has distributed relief items that were collected in centres around the country. Source: VRC

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Overview

Due to unavoidable administrative delays, the relief operation has experienced delays. However, the VRC started the local procurement of hygiene and cleaning kits and identification of target families. The National Society has also assessed the health situation within collective centres, completed the psychosocial support training for volunteers and started printing the informative materials for health, hygiene and sanitation promotion.

In addition, the VRC distributed 1,548 litres of bottle water and 14 tons of children's food in the collective centres located in Caracas with the support of the Turkish Red Crescent on a bilateral basis. The National Society also distributed relief items that were collected nationally.

Simultaneously, the Regional Representation of the Andean Countries and members of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) have been in constant communication with the National Society and other partners to support the operation.

Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)	
Outcome: Families will benefit from the provision of essential non-food items to meet their immediate needs resulting from the floods.	
Outputs	Activities planned
2,500 families will receive essential relief items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to track intended assistance • Ensure coordination with public institutions • Carry out verification and survey of the most affected population and potentially their host families. • Procurement and distribution of hygiene kits, tool kits and cleaning kits. • Conduct monitoring and evaluation.

Progress: After assessing the current situation in all affected states, with volunteers visiting different types of emergency shelters and creating census of the affected population, the VRC has determined that the number of families to be reached in each region is:

State	No. of families
Central District	500
Falcon	525
Miranda	300
Vargas	850
Zulia	325
Total	2,500

With the funds available, the National Society began the procurement process for the hygiene and cleaning kits that will be distributed while completing the health, hygiene and sanitation promotion campaigns.

Challenges: As a result of unavoidable administrative delays, the operation started 50 days later than planned, which affected the original plans developed by the 5 branches involved in the response. In addition, Venezuela has suffered 2.7 per cent inflation during early 2011. This economic situation is affecting the prices which are also exacerbated by the shortages of some products, including food and non-food items like milk, oil, shampoo and feminine pads. In order to overcome this difficulty, the National Society will procure all relief items in smaller batches from different companies to complete the kits.

Emergency health and sanitation	
Outcome: The health of the affected population is improved by the provision of psychosocial support and hygiene and sanitation promotion.	
Outputs	Activities planned
Psychosocial support is provided to 750 people in the five most affected regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train volunteers in psychosocial support techniques • Asses the psychosocial needs of the population. • Carry out 30 group sessions with families in collective centres and those affected by the current floods. • Provide psychosocial support to volunteers.
The health status of 100 families (500 people) is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rapid health, water and sanitation emergency needs and capacity assessments in coordination with local authorities

improved through hygiene and sanitation promotion activities.	<p>and community leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out 20 hygiene and sanitation workshops with the affected population.
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Progress: The National Society completed the first activity to provide psychosocial support to the affected population as per the planned output. In February, staff from Lara branch trained 23 participants from 18 different branches on the following topics:

1. Definition of psychosocial support, roles of volunteers and basic principles in implementation.
2. How to cope with stress, stress related to loss and grief, the meaning of trauma, intervention in case of crisis and basic principles to the psychological stress intervention.
3. Supportive communication: values to take into account in communication; aptitudes in interpersonal communication; ways to answer; stages in constructive communication; assistance in confronting events; group work and diversion.
4. Promoting community self-help: defining community and promoting self-help.
5. Vulnerable needs groups: children; elderly people, people with mental illnesses and people with HIV/AIDS.
6. Helping those that help: stress in the life of volunteers; alerting signs of exhaustion; treating the psychological needs of volunteers; self-help techniques; supporting supervision and mutual help groups.

In coordination with local authorities and managers of collective centres, the volunteers of the VRC have described the following health situation in the five states that will be reached through the emergency appeal:

- Central District of Caracas: In the case of health services provided by the government to the affected population, the larger facilities have ambulances, and there is also team of doctors conducting periodic visits to all collective centres. Of the 12 collective centres visited by the VRC, 4 of them had outbreaks of waterborne diseases (diarrhoea and vomits) in both adults and children, and 3 did not have proper water filters in the installed system.
- Vargas: There are isolated cases of waterborne diseases in collective centres; however, the situation could deteriorate due to overcrowding and poor sanitation conditions. Some cases of sexually transmitted diseases, as well as other contagious pathologies were also identified. Coordinators of the collective centres are soliciting psychosocial support as levels of stress are high and some conflict situations have already arose. The collective centres have some ozone filters, but they are not enough for the size of the population residing in them.
- Miranda: Although further assessments are pending, authorities are monitoring the situation regularly and they have not reported any serious situation.
- Zulia: The most common illnesses detected are scabies and pediculosis, and there are some isolated cases of waterborne diseases. Some shelters have water storage systems, but the water that is delivered with trucks seems to be insufficient for the population's need.
- Falcón: the permanent emergency shelters coordinate with the medical emergency system, to transport anyone in need to the hospitals. There are also periodical medical visits to monitor the health of the affected population. Although further communications with authorities and assessments are still needed, there is not any report of grave diseases.

In addition, the VRC is revising the available information materials on hygiene, health and sanitation and printing more copies to distribute to the affected population. The distribution of this information material will be carried out alongside workshops on the following topics:

1. Safe Water
2. Personal Hygiene
3. Management of solid and faecal waste.
4. Prevention and treatment of diarrheal.
5. Prevention and symptoms of dengue.
6. H1N1. This last topic was included due to the recent H1N1 outbreak detected in the country.

Challenges: The health, hygiene and sanitation promotion campaigns have been delayed until the relief items are procured to avoid leaving too much time in between activities. The decision was taken in an effort to avoid making false expectations.

Capacity of the National Society

Outcome: The capacity of VRC to respond to the current and future emergencies is strengthened.	
Outputs	Activities planned

<p>VRC branch staff is trained to strengthen branch capacity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct one workshop training volunteers on psychosocial support (as mentioned in Emergency health and care) • Conduct one workshop to train volunteers as National Intervention Teams in disaster management • Train volunteers in household/community targeting, registration and monitoring. • Conduct one workshop training volunteers in community based health and first aid.
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Progress: As mentioned in the emergency health section, the National Society has 23 new members trained in psychosocial support techniques who will later train other members in their branches. The rest of the activities will be completed as new funds become available.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

Since the onset of the operation, three articles in newspapers with nationwide distribution, and one show in a local radio in Falcón, had dedicated space to communicate about the work carried out by the VRC and the generous donation provided by Chevron. The VRC also informed about the psychosocial support workshop through national and a local media, informing volunteers interested in participating to later support the affected population residing in collective centres.

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.

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.

Contact information

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[<Financial statement attached below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

MDRVE001 - Venezuela - Floods

Appeal Launch Date: 21 dec 10

Appeal Timeframe: 21 dec 10 to 30 jun 11

Interim Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2010/12-2011/3
Budget Timeframe	2010/12-2011/12
Appeal	MDRVE001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Funding

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	717,571					717,571
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
<u>Cash contributions</u>						
<i>Brazilian Government</i>	46,843					46,843
<i>Canadian Red Cross (from Canadian Government)</i>	49,071					49,071
<i>ChevronTexaco Corp.</i>	382,044					382,044
<i>Japanese Red Cross</i>	23,700					23,700
<i>Swedish Red Cross (from Swedish Government)</i>	71,635					71,635
C1. Cash contributions	573,292					573,292
<u>Other Income</u>						
<i>Fundraising Fees</i>	-19,102					-19,102
C4. Other Income	-19,102					-19,102
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)	554,190					554,190
D. Total Funding = B + C	554,190					554,190
Appeal Coverage	77%					77%

II. Movement of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	554,190					554,190
E. Expenditure	-362,726					-362,726
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	191,465					191,465

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Interim Report

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Reporting Timeframe	2010/12-2011/3
Budget Timeframe	2010/12-2011/12
Appeal	MDRVE001
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Consolidated Expenditure vs. Budget

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		717,571					717,571	
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Shelter - Relief	86,400						86,400	
Other Supplies & Services	360,000						360,000	
Total Relief items, Construction, Supplies	446,400						446,400	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Distribution & Monitoring	14,400						14,400	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	31,200						31,200	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	45,600						45,600	
Personnel								
International Staff	18,576	2,755				2,755	15,821	
National Staff	10,368	21				21	10,348	
National Society Staff	27,072						27,072	
Total Personnel	56,016	2,776				2,776	53,240	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	96,960						96,960	
Total Workshops & Training	96,960						96,960	
General Expenditure								
Travel	7,680	4,086				4,086	3,594	
Information & Public Relation	4,800						4,800	
Office Costs	4,800	194				194	4,606	
Communications	5,760	552				552	5,208	
Financial Charges	5,760	8,600				8,600	-2,840	
Total General Expenditure	28,800	13,432				13,432	15,368	
Operational Provisions								
Operational Provisions		324,379				324,379	-324,379	
Total Operational Provisions		324,379				324,379	-324,379	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Service Support	43,795	22,138				22,138	21,657	
Total Indirect Costs	43,795	22,138				22,138	21,657	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	717,571	362,726				362,726	354,846	
VARIANCE (C - D)		354,846				354,846		