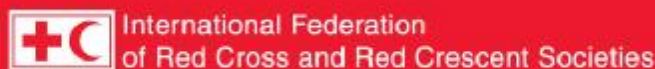


# DREF operation



## Paraguay: Drought 2009

DREF operation n° MDRPY007  
Glide No. DR-2009-000104-PRY  
26 May 2009

The International Federation's 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 response to emergencies. 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.

**CHF 237,515 (USD 218,944 or EUR 156,360) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Paraguayan Red Cross in delivering immediate assistance to some 5,500 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** On 11 May 2009, the Paraguayan government declared a state of emergency due to the drought affecting the departments of Concepción, Ñeembucú, Presidente Hayes, Boquerón and Alto Paraguay. Approximately 185,000 people are affected by lack of basic resources. This DREF operation will provide assistance to 1,100 families in the areas of Concepcion and Ñeembucú through the distribution of food items and seeds for the rehabilitation of crops.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 25 August, 2009; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 25 November, 2009).



A yucca plantation lost due to the drought in Isla Umbu.  
Source: International Federation.

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

## The situation

Since the first trimester of 2009, Paraguay has been facing an extreme cyclical drought. On 11 May, the Paraguayan government declared the departments of Concepcion, Ñeembucú, Presidente Hayes, Boquerón and Alto Paraguay in a state of emergency in order for the affected population (mostly indigenous groups and farmers) to start implementing preventive measures. Changing weather conditions as a result of the El Niño and La Niña phenomena and uncontrolled deforestation in the Chaco region are a few of the causes that have affected the rivers, which constitute the main water supply systems of the region. El Niño and La Niña are the names given to changes in the winds, atmospheric pressure, and seawater that occur in the

Pacific Ocean near the Equator. They are the extremes in a vast repeating cycle called the Southern Oscillation, El Niño being the warm extreme and La Niña the cold extreme.

The drought is not only decreasing the availability of water supply for the region, but is also affecting the agricultural sector.

According to the National Emergency Secretariat (Secretaría de Emergencia Nacional - SEN) more than 60 per cent of the population in the affected areas live below the poverty line. The most vulnerable groups are the indigenous communities with insufficient land to cultivate and generate the income to afford basic necessities. The drought has deteriorated the population's basic livelihoods as communities have temporarily lost the ability to produce their own food and secure their own water supply.

The SEN damage and assessment team and authorities from the department of Concepción indicate that this emergency will cause a decrease in the water supply and an increase in water borne diseases and fires. Currently, there are approximately between 30,000 to 50,000 families affected. The following table shows the affected departments, number families affected and level of affectation:

Department	Affected		Affectations
	Families	People	
Boquerón	9,000	45,000	Lack of water and underground water sources with high levels of sodium (which can cause diarrhoea and dehydration). Malnutrition due to lack of food, and acute diarrhoea
Presidente Hayes	11,000	55,000	Lack of water and underground sources of water with sodium, and acute diarrhoea
Alto Paraguay	2,000	10,000	Lack of water and underground sources of water with sodium, and acute diarrhoea
Concepción	10,000	50,000	Agricultural production has been affected; lack of water and food.
Ñeembucú	5,000	25,000	Decrease in production of livestock and agriculture causing lack of food. Lack of water.
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>185,000</b>	

The main source of income of the population of the Isla Umbu, a municipality in the department of Ñeembucú, is milk production. Local farmers produce approximately 3,000 litres of milk per year and grow agricultural products including maize, sugar cane, cotton, and also keep livestock. The lack of rain in the region of Ñeembucú has severely hit the production of basic items and has affected livestock. The Ministry of Agriculture reports a decrease in the production levels of crops, including maize, beans and yucca, over recent years. Moreover, Isla Umbú has two main rivers: El Parana and Paraguay rivers. The lack of rain has caused the river flow to diminish substantially, affecting the main crops and wetlands.



The inhabitants of Isla Umbú can access water through artisan wells. During the last two years the phreatic surface<sup>1</sup> has been affected due to the lack of rain. Throughout many years, stockbreeders had been digging lagoons during winter in order for their livestock to have water in the summer time. This technique is no longer functioning due to lack of rainfall. In addition, the milk production has decreased 80 per cent due to lack of pasture for the livestock. Some stockbreeders have had to resort to selling what is left of their livestock in order to have some income to buy food items.

Since 1999, the Paraguayan Red Cross (PRC) has been working on development projects in the most vulnerable communities in the country, supported by the International Federation and also by bilateral agreements with the Spanish Red Cross, with a focus on health and disaster preparedness. Following the drought which affected the Chaco region in 2002, the Federation launched an appeal to assist the department of Boquerón. As a result of this appeal, more sustainable and long-term projects in the communities were developed. Nevertheless, every year the droughts have been affecting increasing number of people and further short term and long-term projects are needed to assist the most vulnerable.

## Coordination and partnerships

Since the onset of the crisis, the Paraguayan Red Cross has been coordinating relief actions with the National Emergency Secretariat, the Emergency Department Committee of Concepción and Ñeembucú as well as the affected municipalities. The local branches in each municipality will assist and coordinate with all actors involved.

The Minister of Agriculture jointly with the Paraguayan Red Cross are in the process of conducting rapid needs and damage assessments and will plan further actions to meet the needs of the most affected during the drought, outside of this DREF operation.

The International Federation through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for the Southern Cone is communicating with and providing support to the National Society. A disaster management delegate and a disaster management Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member were deployed from PADRU to Paraguay, through funds outside of this DREF operation, to provide support to the PRC in drawing up the plan of action.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the emergency started, the Paraguayan Red Cross activated its response team. Additionally, the PRC has been providing humanitarian assistance and has been defining the lines of action in order to fulfil the basic needs of the population and minimize risk in the affected areas. Due to the high level of undernourishment and spread of diseases, the PRC is working congruently with the lines of action established by the SEN and local authorities. The PRC elaborated a plan of action for this DREF operation, which forms part of a general plan to provide response to the needs of five departments.

The PRC will work through the local branches in each department (only Presidente Hayes does not have a local Red Cross branch). The DREF allocation will provide one agricultural community and one urban community from the departments of Concepción and Ñeembucú (1,100 families) with complementary food items and seed for agricultural crops.

Interviews conducted by the PRC volunteers with one of the affected families reported that the family's most viable means of subsistence are vegetable crops that are able to resist the low temperatures of the Chaco region. This will be taken into consideration when supplying the seeds to the beneficiaries.

## The needs

The Paraguayan Red Cross has identified the most immediate needs for the short term and medium term to benefit the most vulnerable families. The basic needs identified are: distribution of safe water, food security and rehabilitation of livelihoods (distribution of seeds).

## The proposed operation

The PRC developed a plan of action to assist 1,100 families (approximately 5,500 people) in the departments of Concepción and Ñeembucú — rural and surrounding urban areas — with supplementary

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<sup>1</sup> Also called water table. is the upper level of [groundwater](#) (water collected underground in porous rocks).

food parcels and rehabilitation of livelihoods in the agricultural sector (distribution of seeds, fertilizer, insecticides). The beneficiary criteria established in this DREF operation are:

- Families located in areas affected by the drought in the departments of Concepción and Ñeembucú.
- Small farmer families that have at least one hectare to seven hectares of land for crops and whose crops that have been damaged by the drought.
- Communities whose source of food supply has been affected or is in risk of being depleted.

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective: To assist 1,100 of the most vulnerable families in the departments of Concepción and Ñeembucú with humanitarian aid consisting of supplementary food items.**

#### Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Develop a beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Selection of suppliers.
- Monthly distribution of a 47kg food parcel to the 1,100 families that are small farmers.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.
- Develop an exit strategy.

Each family will receive a supplementary food parcel weighing 47kg for one month until their crops are rehabilitated. The table below details the food items that will be included in the food parcels:

Item	Quantity in kg per month (30 days)
Rice	10
Flour	5
Noodles	5
Sugar	5
Beans	10
Salt	2
Tea	5
Cooking oil	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47kg</b>

In the next DREF Bulletin update, the National Society will provide the nutritional value of the food parcels, once items have been purchased.

### Rehabilitation of livelihoods

**Objective: 1,100 of the most affected small farmer families in the departments of Concepción and Ñeembucú will receive seeds to sow new crops.**

#### Activities planned:

- Two agronomists will perform damage and needs assessments in the communities affected by the drought.
- Selection and census of beneficiaries.
- Selection of suppliers.
- Distribution of seeds to affected families.
- Agronomists will provide technical assistance.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

The following table shows the communities and number of families that will be benefited with complementary food parcels and seeds:

Community	N° of families	Estimated N° of people	Type of Assistance
<b>Department of Ñeembucú</b>			

Isla Umbú	300	1,500	Food parcels and seeds
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>1,500</b>	
<b>Department of Concepcion</b>			
Arroyito	800	4,000	Food parcels and seeds
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>4,000</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>5,500</b>	

## How we work

*All International Federation 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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

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

- **In Paraguay:** Teresa Gamarra, Paraguayan Red Cross Project Coordinator; email: [tgamarra@highway.com.py](mailto:tgamarra@highway.com.py); phone: (595) 98 239 1737
- **In Panama:** Ariel Kestens, Head of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit, email: [ariel.kestens@ifrc.org](mailto:ariel.kestens@ifrc.org); phone: (507) 316 1001; fax: (507) 316 1082.
- **In Panama:** Omar Robinson; water and sanitation officer, PADRU; email: [omar.robinson@ifrc.org](mailto:omar.robinson@ifrc.org); phone: (507) 316 1001; fax: (507) 316 1082
- **In Buenos Aires:** Gustavo Ramirez, Regional Representative for the Southern Cone; email: [gustavo.ramirez@ifrc.org](mailto:gustavo.ramirez@ifrc.org);
- **In Panama:** Maria Alcázar, Resource Mobilization Coordinator for the Americas; email: [maria.alcazar@ifrc.org](mailto:maria.alcazar@ifrc.org); phone: (507) 380 0250; fax: (507) 317 1304.
- **In Geneva:** Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator for the Americas; email: [pablo.medina@ifrc.org](mailto:pablo.medina@ifrc.org) phone (41) 79 217 3376; fax: (41) 22 730 0395.

[<DREF budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

**DREF OPERATION BUDGET SUMMARY**  
**PARAGUAY DROUGHT**

Annex I  
MDRPY007

BUDGET CHF

**RELIEF NEEDS**

Shelter	
Construction Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	
Food	98,190
Seeds & Plants	85,917
Water & Sanitation	
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	
Other Supplies & Services	
<b>Total Relief Needs</b>	<b>184,107</b>

**CAPITAL EQUIPMENT**

Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computers & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	

**TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES**

Storage - Warehouse	
Distribution & Monitoring	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	10,042
Service fee & Recovery	

**PERSONNEL**

International Staff	
Regionally Deployed Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	13,948
Consultants	5,021

**WORKSHOPS & TRAINING**

Workshops & Training	
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**GENERAL EXPENSES**

Travel	3,013
Information & Public Relations	1,985
Office running costs	1,004
Communication Costs	837
Professional Fees	
Financial Charges	2,120
Other General Expenses	

**PROGRAMME SUPPORT**

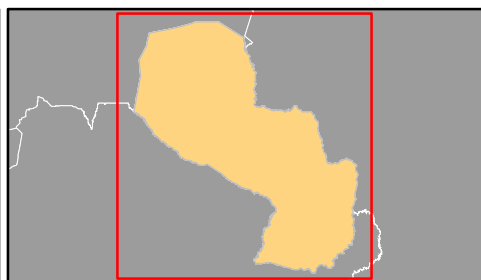
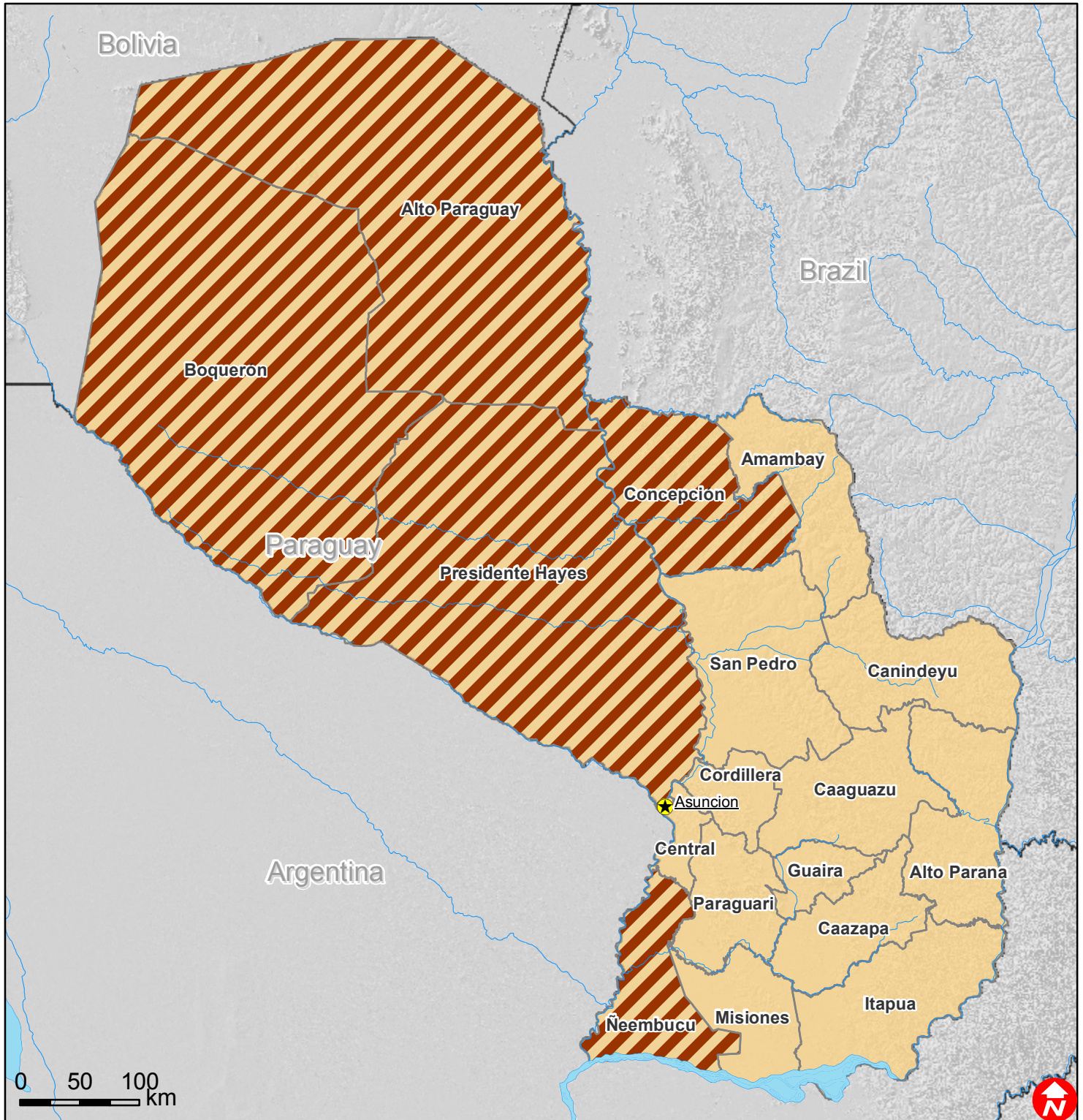
Programme Support - PSR	15,438
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**Total Operational Needs 53,408**

**DREF ALLOCATION 237,515**



# Paraguay: Drought



- Capitals
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Departments
- Affected areas