

DREF operation n° MDRCL008
GLIDE n° WF-2012-000001-CHL
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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.

Period covered by this update: 11 January 2012 to 5 February 2012.

Summary: CHF 68,799 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 11 January 2012 to support the Chilean Red Cross (ChRC) in delivering immediate assistance to 250 families (1,000 persons) affected by the wildfires that spread through the regions of Biobío, La Araucanía, Magallanes and Maule, in Chile. Keeping close coordination with local authorities and other organizations operating in the region, the National Society is assisting the affected families with essential relief items, access to safe water, first aid care and psychosocial support.



During the period covered by this update 231 families (924 persons)

Beneficiaries received relief items from Chilean Red Cross volunteers.
Source: ChRC

received first aid kits, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and tarpaulins from the Chilean Red Cross. The ChRC remaining distributions will be complete between February and March.

In addition, with the support of the DREF, the ChRC volunteers were able to provide information to families about the adequate use of their first aid kits, and offer psychosocial support and first aid to families sheltered in collective centres. Volunteers who participated since the onset of the wildfires also received protective gear procured through this DREF operation.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by April 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by July 2012).

The IFRC, on behalf of the Chilean Red Cross, would like to extend their gratitude to the Canadian Red Cross for their generous contribution to replenishing the allocation made for this operation. Details of all donors can be found on: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/responding/disaster-response-system/financial-instruments/disaster-relief-emergency-fund-dref/>

The situation

On 29 December 2011, a forest fire was reported in the Biobío region, affecting the communes¹ of Quillón and Florida, province of Ñuble. The fire rapidly spread due to high temperatures and favourable wind conditions, prompting the Chilean government to issue a red alert on 1 January 2012. More than 500 persons were evacuated from the area as some 529 brigadiers, fire fighters and soldiers worked to contain the fires that consumed more than 30,253 hectares of forest, grasslands and crops, and destroyed over 200 homes. Almost a week later, on 5 January, the same area was also declared as “zone of agricultural emergency”, which facilitated the mobilization of resources to address the food insecurity situation.

At the same time, the Maule region also suffered severe fires and a red alert was declared. Although by 10 January, the main sources were extinguished, the fires destroyed 8,922 hectares, affected 200 families and damaged 30 homes. In addition, 40 families are without electricity supply which is also affecting their access to safe water, as most homes depend on water pumps to draw the water from wells. Through the reporting period other fires started in Torres del Paine National Park, located in the Magallanes region in Chile's far south, and La Araucanía region also reported three wildfires that took the lives of seven brigadiers.

Up to the point of the launching of this DREF, the fires had severely affected the communes of Florida, Quillon and Ranquil:

Region	Commune	Homes destroyed	Affected persons
Maule	Cauquenes	30	19
Biobío	Florida	10	80
	Quillón	166	747
	Ranqui	47	235
	Quirihue	1	1
Araucanía	Carahue	---	--
	Lumaco	---	--
Total		254	1,082

A large sector of the economy in the affected areas is dependent on fruit and forest crops (such as vineyards, eucalyptus trees), many of which were severely affected by the fires. More than 250 families have been left homeless as a result of the wildfires. The Chilean government will be providing transitional shelters (mediaguas) while permanent housing is completed in 10 to 12 months. The Ministry of Housing stated that the reconstruction of destroyed homes is expected to start before March 2012.

Coordination and partnerships

The National Society has worked in closed partnership with local and national authorities, as well as other relevant partners who participated in operations related to the disaster, such as resource and work coordination with the Regional Intendancy and Ministry of Planning and Social Development. Cooperation with local authorities, technicians and disaster experts from the municipalities of Florida, Quillon and Ranquil also took place.

The assistance has been carried out in coordination and a joint effort with experts and volunteers from the Humanitarian Aid Network of Chile (RACH) such as the Methodist Humanitarian Aid Team (EMAH), World Vision – Chile, Chilean Volunteer Psychologists and the Girl Scouts and Scouts Association of Chile.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Progress towards outcomes

On the onset of the emergency, before the DREF was launched, the Chilean Red Cross carried out several first response actions, in coordination with local and national authorities and partners. This assistance ranged from support in the evacuation of people living in areas affected by the fire and of personnel working on the containment of the fires, including the provision of first aid and treatment of first degree burns.

¹ Communes (comuna in Spanish) in Chile correspond to the third-level administrative division of the country, similar to municipalities. The country is divided into 15 regions, 54 provinces and 346 communes.

In addition, during the National Society dispatched 40 hygiene kits, 124 buckets, 58 food parcels, 2,475 litres of safe water and 336 diapers in the communes of Ranquil and Quillon, tending to the needs of more than 50 families in the region of Biobío, including 72 women, 82 men, three children and three senior citizens.

Three water pumps (with capacity to pump 500 litres per minute) were dispatched to support governmental authorities to contain the fires. The pumps are being used to fill the air tankers in use in Quillón.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
Outcome: The immediate needs of 250 families affected by the wildfires are met through the distribution of relief items
Outputs: 250 families receive kitchen sets and tarpaulins.
Activities planned:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in the collective centres and affected communities. • Develop a distribution plan. • Procure or replenish and distribute relief items (kitchen sets and tarpaulins). • Monitor the relief activities and provide reporting on distributions.

Progress:

During the period covered by this update, 231 families (924 persons) received kitchen sets from the Chilean Red Cross. The distribution also included tarpaulins for 120 families. It is expected that the rest of the items will be distributed between February and March. In this particular outcome, around 92.4 per cent of kitchen set distributions and 48 per cent of tarpaulin distributions are complete.

Most of the affected families lost all their crops and livelihoods as well as their homes. The National Society, with the support of Partner National Societies, is considering extending their ReD card to assist some of these families. The ReD card is project was created after the 2010 Earthquake that has been coordinated jointly between the CRCh and the IFRC, and with funding from the American Red Cross and British Red Cross. The RED Card is a debit card designed for purchasing construction materials for repairs and reconstruction of the houses that suffered damages but that can still be fixed.

Challenges:

- The current stock of tarpaulins is not enough to cover all the target population; therefore, the National Society is locally procuring the additional items.

Emergency health
Outcome: Affected families have access to first aid services and psychosocial support
Output 1: 250 families receive family first aid kits and are informed about their use.
Activities planned:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in the collective centres and affected communities. • Develop a distribution plan. • Procure and distribute family first aid kits • Inform families on the use of the first aid kits • Monitor and report on health activities
Output 2: Families sheltered in collective centres receive psychosocial support and first aid care.
Activities planned:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide first aid care to the affected population • Review and update inventories of first aid kits used by volunteers and replenish them as needed. • Provide psychosocial support to affected groups in collective centres. • Monitor and report on health activities

Progress:

By the end of this reporting period 231 families (924 persons), from the total target of 250 families have received first aid kits. The Chilean Red Cross volunteers also provided information to beneficiaries on how to use its contents at the moment of delivery.

Chilean Red Cross volunteers have also offered psychosocial support and first aid to families sheltered in collective centres. During the peak of the response 38 volunteers were active providing these services.

At the time of the first response to the emergency, volunteers also assisted people injured while evacuating the area threatened by fires, including the provision of first aid and treatment of first degree burns.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases is reduced through the provision of hygiene kits and access to safe water and means for safe storage.

Output: 250 families receive 1 hygiene kit, 1 water filter and 2 buckets with lid

Activities planned:

- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in the collective centres and affected communities.
- Develop a distribution plan.
- Procure or replenish and distribute relief items (hygiene kits, water filters and buckets).
- Monitor and provide reporting on distributions.

Progress:

During the period covered by this update 231 families (924 persons) received hygiene kits and buckets (2 per family) from the Chilean Red Cross. It is expected that the rest of the kits and buckets, which have already been procured, will be distributed in the coming month.

In addition, after a technical meeting with ONEMI and municipal authorities in Quillón, it was agreed that the ChRC would lead the humanitarian assistance carried out by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To support the work of volunteers and staff in the affected areas of Biobío, the National Society has also deployed a National Intervention Team (NIT) composed of four general NIT members, four water and sanitation NITs, and two Health NITs specialized in psychosocial support and emergency health.

Challenges:

- There was no stock of activated carbon water filters in storage, and there are no local/national suppliers in Chile that can make them according to the specifications and quality standards required. In this regard, the National Society is getting quotes from international sources.

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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 \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) 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.
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