

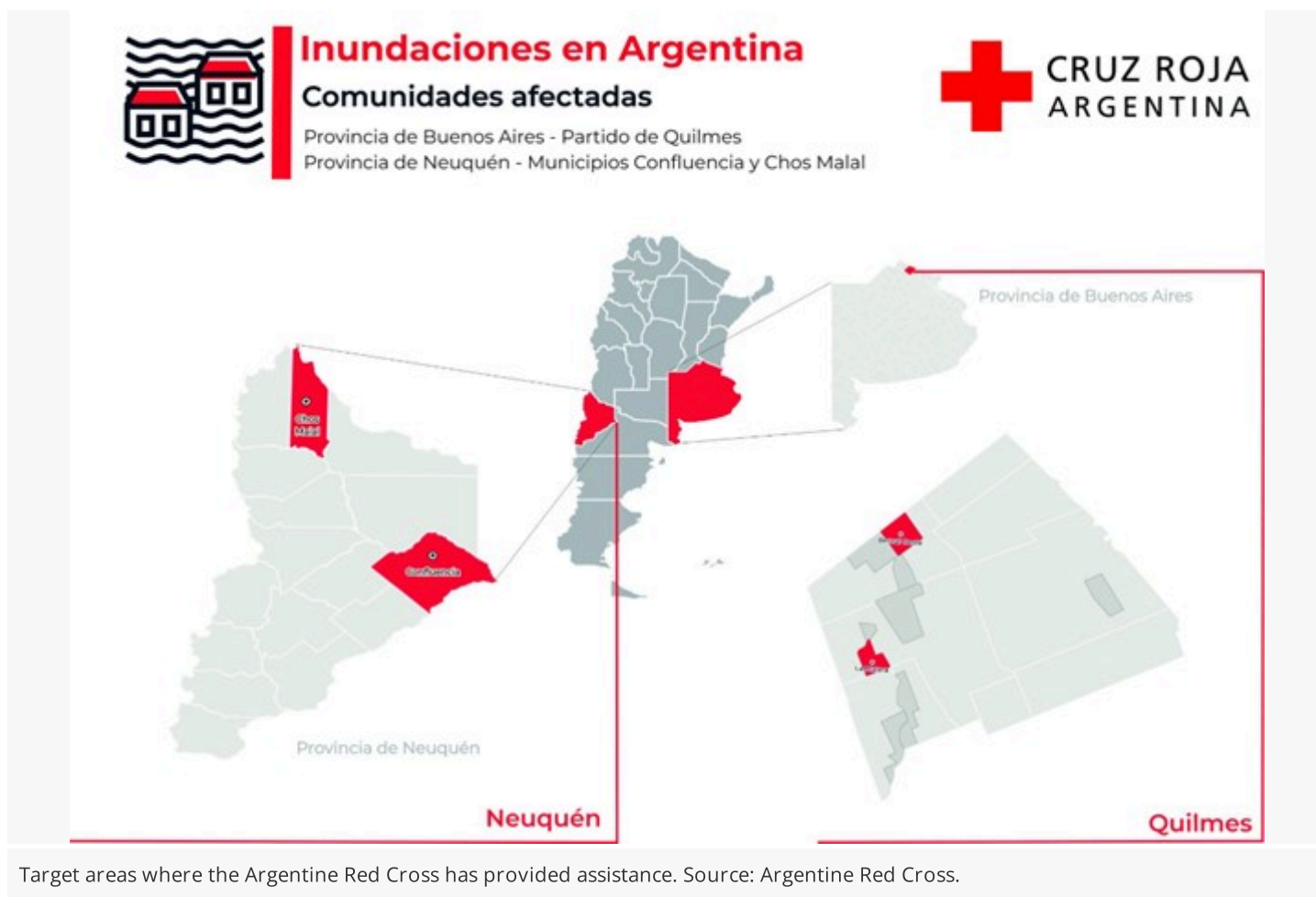


Delivery of humanitarian aid, Chos Malal. Source: Argentine Red Cross.

Appeal: <b>MDRAR019</b>	Total DREF Allocation: <b>CHF 269,978</b>	Crisis Category: <b>Yellow</b>	Hazard: <b>Flood</b>
Glide Number: <b>FL-2023-000089-ARG</b>	People Affected: <b>38,000 people</b>	People Targeted: <b>5,000 people</b>	
Event Onset: <b>Sudden</b>	Operation Start Date: <b>06-06-2023</b>	Operational End Date: <b>30-11-2023</b>	Total Operating Timeframe: <b>5 months</b>
Targeted Areas: <b>Buenos Aires, Neuquén</b>			

The major donors and partners of the IFRC-DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, China, Czech, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, and the Netherlands, as well as DG ECHO, Mondelez Foundation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the National Society, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

# Description of the Event



## Date of event

28-05-2023

## What happened, where and when?

During the month of June 2023, various storms caused floods in different areas of Argentina due to accumulated water over regions that had been suffering from the impact of the "El Niño" hydrometeorological event, during which drought conditions had prevailed for more than 3 consecutive years in the region. Buenos Aires Province, specifically the locality of Quilmes (one of its 135 districts), and Neuquén Province (Confluencia and Chos Malal departments) were the most affected, with impacts on communities not only due to water accumulations on the ground but also due to increased water flow in various water basins. More than 20,000 people were affected in Quilmes, and in the case of Neuquén, 18,000 people.

At the end of May 2023, the Argentine National Meteorological Service (SMN) issued various alert communications for the provinces of Santa Fe, Córdoba, Entre Ríos, and some areas of Buenos Aires Province, due to different hydrometeorological events. In the municipality of Quilmes, Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires Province, abundant precipitation occurred, leaving accumulations exceeding 100 millimeters (monthly accumulated) within a period of 24 to 48 hours.

As a result, streets were flooded, and streams overflowed, resulting in floods in several areas of the municipality. These floods were exacerbated by new precipitations on May 26, causing further damage, including the affecting of roads and streets, water ingress into homes, power outages, and failures in the supply of drinking water. These adversities affected a total of 12 neighborhoods located near the Piedras, Santo Domingo, and San Francisco streams.

The local Subsecretariat of Emergencies and Civil Protection, with the support of the Volunteer Fire Department, evacuated approximately 140 people who were temporarily housed in 4 shelters distributed throughout the western area of the municipality.

In some areas near the streams, places where waste is irregularly disposed of were identified. As a result of the floods, these wastes were



washed towards homes, creating emerging disease hotspots. Furthermore, this situation hindered the proper drainage of storm drains and sewers, exacerbating the impact of the floods in the affected areas.

On May 29, the Subsecretariat of Emergencies and Civil Protection of the Municipality of Quilmes made a formal request to the Argentine Red Cross to provide assistance to the affected families. This request for support was in addition to the one made by the Health Secretariat of the same municipality, which sought collaboration in early recovery efforts in health matters, especially in the La Madera and Bernal Oeste neighborhoods, which were two of the most affected by the event.

During the afternoon of Friday, June 23, the Argentine National Meteorological Service issued a red alert in its early warning system for the Province of Neuquén. Forecasts predicted more than 200 millimeters of rain in high mountain areas and more than 90 mm in various areas of the province, due to the advance of low-pressure systems coming from the Pacific Ocean.

As the hours passed, the projections were fulfilled, and intense storms occurred, causing multiple local-level impacts, especially a significant increase in the flow of several water basins in the provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro. These precipitations exceeded historical records for the last 10 years, mainly in the basins of the Neuquén and Curi Leuvú rivers.

On June 28, the Argentine Red Cross received a new formal request from the government of the Neuquén Province to support the affected families by the recent floods in Neuquén Province, located approximately 1,000 km from Buenos Aires Province. As a result of the request, on the same date, a state of emergency of category 1 was declared.

By July 5, more than 20 localities had experienced the impact of the hydrometeorological event and river flooding, with varying degrees of impact, exacerbated by pre-existing vulnerabilities due to their geographical location. In northern Neuquén, the river levels decreased rapidly in the days following the flood; however, the high sediment load in suspension covered cultivable land, homes, grazing areas, and water intakes. On the other hand, the river surge of the Neuquén and Limay rivers continued downstream, towards the east of Neuquén Province, collecting more water from all tributaries and accumulating in the alluvial defense systems of the Confluencia municipality. The high river levels, combined with the constant water discharge from the dams to maintain operational safety levels, the saturation of the riverbed terrain, and the rise of groundwater levels, hindered the normal drainage of the waters, which remained stagnant until the end of September 2023. The most affected localities were Centenario and Vista Alegre, both located on the banks of the Neuquén River.

This scenario was also aggravated by the seasonal meteorological conditions typical of the Patagonian region, characterized by strong and cold winds during winter. This is especially noticeable in the mountain range and pre-mountain range, where the dry climate and low temperatures, with freezing averages for much of the year and precipitation in the form of rain, sleet, or snow.



Hygiene Promotion Activities, Quilmes. Source: Argentine Red Cross.



Community focus groups, Neuquén. Source: Argentine Red Cross.

## Scope and Scale

As of 1 June, the municipal government reported that approximately 4,000 families (equivalent to 20,000 individuals) had been affected by the floods in Quilmes, representing a portion of the 221,850 households in the municipality. Most of the affected individuals resided in homes situated along the banks of streams, including La Madera, El Tala, Villa La Florida, La Paz, Bernal Oeste, Kolynos, La Cañada, Santa Lucía, and San Francisco Solano. Precipitation exceeded 130 millimeters in some areas, leading to street flooding and stream overflows.

Initial damage and needs assessment reports from the Quilmes Municipality's Subsecretariat of Emergencies and Civil Protection revealed the loss of belongings and personal effects of the affected individuals, including mattresses, clothing, and bedding. Additionally, there was



a recognized need for home and communal space cleaning, as well as attention to family and personal hygiene and first aid while evacuation centers remained operational.

The floods resulted in water entering numerous homes, persisting for at least 24 hours. As a result, affected families were compelled to drain the accumulated water themselves. Reports also indicated tree and power pole collapses, as well as the displacement of vehicles parked on public roads. These factors posed challenges to normal traffic flow and disrupted basic services. Although at least 60,000 electricity users were left without power for several hours following the severe storm on 26 May, communities residing in areas with lightweight housing materials, such as metal sheets, wood, and tarps, were the most vulnerable to damage and destruction. Furthermore, stream pollution, combined with the floods, increased the risk of waterborne diseases and vector-borne illnesses. This occurred within a national context of seasonal dengue and other arboviruses, exacerbating exposure to seasonal diseases such as influenza and acute respiratory infections. In these areas, drainage systems were compromised due to the accumulation of waste that the population disposed of in inappropriate or makeshift locations.

In Neuquén Province the primary impacts consisted of loss and damage to family assets, either directly within homes or causing significant impacts on road infrastructure. More than 15 national and provincial routes were cut off, along with the incapacitation of bridges and rural roads. Additionally, there were interruptions or limitations in electricity generation and distribution services, potable water provision, and availability of natural and bottled gas. Partial damages to homes and livelihoods, such as farm animals destined for commercialization and family consumption, as well as agricultural tools, were also reported.

The greatest impacts encompassed approximately 20 localities in 6 departments of Neuquén Province, spanning around 12,000 square kilometers. This directly and indirectly affected around 18,000 individuals, including urban, peri-urban (including informal settlements), and rural populations (including isolated settlements in the Andean foothills).

In some localities, post-flood recovery work was undertaken, with homes covered in mud facing difficulties in cleaning. The most affected towns included Chos Malal, Centenario, Neuquén, Sauzal Bonito, Vista Alegre, Butalon Norte, Los Guañacos, Manzano Amargo, Pichi Neuquén, Buta Raquil, Quili Malal, among others. The provincial government estimated that the recovery of affected areas would take approximately 5 months and would require an investment exceeding 2.5 billion Argentine pesos.

At the close of the reporting period, a discernible amelioration in the prevailing conditions is evident. Water levels have significantly subsided, reflecting a marked improvement in the flood situation. Reconstruction endeavors have been initiated and are yielding tangible progress, particularly in the rehabilitation of affected infrastructure and residential properties. Moreover, proactive measures have been undertaken to fortify resilience against potential future disasters, exemplified by intensified river channel maintenance and waste management initiatives.

## National Society Actions

Have the National Society conducted any intervention additionally to those part of this DREF Operation?	No
Please provide a brief description of those additional activities	-

## IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

<b>Secretariat</b>	<p>The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has a Country Cluster Delegation (CCD) office in Argentina to support and assist the Southern Cone countries, which has maintained close contact and coordination with the Argentine Red Cross and the Health, Disaster, Climate and Crises Department of the IFRC Americas regional office in Panama.</p> <p>From the beginning of the emergency, constant communication and technical assistance was maintained through the CCD for the Southern Cone for the implementation of the DREF Application as well as for the development of the activities. Weekly monitoring meetings and field visits were conducted by the Delegation team.</p>
<b>Participating National Societies</b>	There were no Participating National Societies (PNS) involved in the operation.



# ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has offices in Argentina and, in addition to carrying out actions within its mandate, such as working with the authorities to integrate, implement and disseminate international humanitarian law and rules on the use of force, it carries out actions to develop the capacity of the National Society to respond to situations of violence and crisis contexts and to provide Restoring Family Links (RFL) services.

## Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

<b>Government has requested international assistance</b>	No
<b>National authorities</b>	<p>Quilmes: The Municipal Government, under the coordination of the local Executive and the Subsecretariat of Emergencies and Civil Protection, swiftly activated all local response mechanisms. Various municipal departments were involved in clearing drains, opening four evacuation centers to accommodate approximately 140 people, and providing support in evacuation tasks, among other actions. Once the response phase was completed, activities for assessment, evaluation, and assistance to the most affected families began, including the distribution of essential items such as mattresses and blankets. The Provincial Directorate of Civil Defense of Buenos Aires Province established an operational base at "Puente 12" to continuously monitor events.</p> <p>Neuquén: The Federal Security Articulation Secretariat, under the National Ministry of Security, maintained constant and close communication in coordination with federal forces, especially the Gendarmerie and the Argentine Army, which have a significant presence in the province. These forces focus on road control, monitoring, and clearance, evacuation of people, and distribution of humanitarian aid, among other tasks. They are constantly monitoring the region and are available to support provincial authorities.</p> <p>In Neuquén Province, all response mechanisms were activated, with the participation of various provincial ministries. The Provincial Civil Defense, the Ministry of Security, and the Secretariat of Human Development played a fundamental role, including the development of needs surveys. The different affected departments worked through their departmental structures, with support in some cases from the province. In addition to direct assistance to families and evacuations, priority was given to restoring or replacing water, electricity, and gas services. Furthermore, work was carried out on the hydrological regulation of the involved basins.</p>
<b>UN or other actors</b>	<p>Quilmes: No presence of other organizations in the area has been recorded. The Volunteer Firefighters of Quilmes played an important role in the emergency response, working in collaboration with local Civil Protection.</p> <p>Neuquén: Volunteer firefighters from different regions, grouped under the Federation of Volunteer Firefighters of Neuquén, were deployed in their respective jurisdictions carrying out various tasks. Additionally, grassroots local organizations and several unions joined forces to assist in collecting donations and supporting the most affected families, providing items such as warm clothing, mattresses, water, bottled gas, among others.</p>

### Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Argentine Red Cross, operating through its Department of Emergencies and Disasters, was actively engaged in direct coordination with national, provincial, and municipal authorities throughout the emergency response efforts. Despite the absence of permanent working spaces or dedicated coordination tables, the organization ensured continuous communication channels with various local branches of volunteer firefighters. This collaboration facilitated the exchange of critical information, resources, and expertise necessary for an effective response.

Moreover, the Argentine Red Cross maintained close contact with other key institutions involved in emergency response activities, such as the CADENA Foundation and similar organizations. This collaborative network allowed for the pooling of resources, expertise,



and manpower to address the multifaceted challenges posed by the disaster situation.

By fostering strong interinstitutional relations and coordination, the Argentine Red Cross played a vital role in optimizing the overall response efforts. Through shared expertise and resources, they were able to provide timely and effective assistance to affected communities, demonstrating the importance of collaborative approaches in disaster management.

## Needs (Gaps) Identified



### Shelter Housing And Settlements

In Quilmes, the municipal government reported that around 4,000 families (approximately 20,000 people) were affected by the heavy rains and overflow of the Piedras, Santo Domingo, and San Francisco streams. Although there were no direct damages to infrastructure, such as blown roofs or total destruction of homes, the water ingress resulted in the loss of essential items for the affected families, such as refrigerators, furniture, clothing, and documentation.

Due to the sudden nature of the floods, four Evacuation Centers were opened and later closed, accommodating around 140 people (28 families). These centers were set up in Community Integration Centers (CIC) and a Sports Center in the western area of the municipality, specifically at the Solano Neighborhood Sports Center, CIC - Santa María, CIC - La Paz, and CIC - Santo Domingo.

Meanwhile, the Municipality's Social Development department distributed items such as mattresses and blankets to meet these needs. As people returned to their homes, they faced difficulties due to the condition in which the houses were left after the water receded, necessitating cleaning, including the removal of residual water, mud, and disinfection of household items that came into contact with contaminated water. This department, with the support of local Civil Defense, provided direct assistance to address these needs.

The national government increased the amounts of social assistance for people affected by the flood. No new specific urgent needs were identified for this sector.

In Neuquén province, the storms caused an increase in river flow, reaching levels not seen in over 10 years, according to expert reports. As a result, at least 500 families were affected in different areas of the province. As the event unfolded, the floods spread downstream, affecting communities spread over an area of approximately 12,000 km<sup>2</sup>, with road distances of up to 450 km, and even reaching the Río Negro Province.

At least 8 communities were completely isolated due to the state of the accesses, some of which became islands with a single bridge as the only access route that was completely submerged underwater. More than 400 families were evacuated or self-evacuated to relatives' and acquaintances' homes. In some neighborhoods, the previous state of the houses hindered the return home as the floods washed away a large amount of mud and sediment, where many of these had precarious electrical connections that were cut off for safety reasons by the municipality.

Except for some particular cases, no total losses of homes were reported, nor a significant impact on infrastructure in general, but structural aspects of the houses were observed to be affected, mainly due to water ingress with mud.

As a result of the rapid assessments carried out by the Argentine Red Cross, the main need in this regard was identified as the removal of mud and sediment left by the floods, as they washed away a large amount of sediment, so it was essential to provide support to families with the necessary tools for these tasks.



### Livelihoods And Basic Needs

During the rapid and thorough assessments conducted in Quilmes, situations related to the vulnerability of the affected communities in terms of livelihoods were identified. However, during the floods, communities were able to protect their main assets thanks to early warning systems and preventive measures taken.

In the Neuquén province, fruit production is a prominent activity, especially in the Alto Valle, where the Neuquén and Limay rivers converge. This region specializes in the cultivation of apples, pears, peaches, plums, walnuts, and cherries. In colder areas, strawberries, raspberries, and other delicate fruits are grown. As for livestock, sheep farming is predominant, and goat farming is mainly concentrated in the central and northern parts of the province. Additionally, the region is abundant in the production of farm animals for sale and family consumption. The floods had a significant impact on the livelihoods of the community, resulting in losses of farm animals, damage



to pens, orchards, and tools, affecting both local trade and community development. Government authorities worked to provide specific responses in this area (distribution of firewood, fencing, sandbags, restocking of livestock) and to mitigate the consequences of the floods.

In Quilmes, as well as in Neuquén province, efforts were made to restore normalcy and rebuild affected areas. Communities received support for recovery and reconstruction efforts, including assistance for restoring livelihoods and infrastructure. Moreover, measures were implemented to prevent future disasters, such as river channel maintenance and waste management initiatives. Despite the challenges, the resilience and solidarity of the communities have played a crucial role in overcoming the crisis.



## Health

In Quilmes, the Argentine Red Cross and the local government, through rapid and detailed assessments, identified the need to strengthen the promotion and prevention of emerging diseases associated with flooding, as well as early detection of health situations for prompt containment. As a result, the main concerns focused on gastrointestinal diseases, vector-borne diseases, and respiratory and skin diseases.

The Municipal Health Department conducted tours of the affected areas to expand assessments and refer individuals to Community Integrative Centers or Health Centers for appropriate evaluations and possible treatments. For this purpose, support from the Argentine Red Cross was requested. Additionally, the characteristics of the event, aggravated by pre-existing conditions of stream contamination, posed a panorama of epidemiological risk related to vector-borne diseases, diseases related to contact with or consumption of unsafe water, and the increase in seasonal diseases. Therefore, specific assessments were carried out regarding water, sanitation, and hygiene, as well as the health conditions of the affected people.

For this operation, all teams mobilized for the different activities received specific training and the necessary basic first aid items to carry out their work. Throughout the operation, the teams were available to provide first aid in situations that might arise.

In coordination with the Municipal Health Department, emphasis was placed on vector-borne diseases such as dengue, Zika, and chikungunya, as well as seasonal diseases that, in combination with the event, could increase the population's exposure. Especially in neighborhoods located near the streams, respiratory diseases such as bronchitis, asthma, and influenza were recorded during this time of year.

In the Province of Neuquén, the affected municipalities worked in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Human Development, responsible for conducting damage and needs assessments, in coordination with the public health system. In one of the isolated localities, where the river's overflow caused the total destruction of the access bridge, the provincial government sent medicines and food via helicopter for the inhabitants.

Given the actions carried out by Human Development and the potential risks derived from floods, such as contamination and gastrointestinal and respiratory diseases, in addition to winter climatic conditions, it was identified as necessary to provide emotional support to children and promote health to reduce the number of affected individuals. Additionally, consideration was given to the elderly population living in rural areas or distant places from medical care centers and hospitals, so all teams of the Argentine Red Cross traveled with basic first aid supplies and trained personnel.



## Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

In Quilmes, flooding onset resulted in early disruptions to the drinking water supply, primarily due to electricity supply issues and minor glitches in several water treatment facilities. Although efforts were made to restore normal water distribution, some households encountered ongoing challenges with their water sources. To address this, targeted interventions were implemented to assist a limited number of families until their access to water was fully restored.

The most heavily impacted area was intersected by three streams—Piedras, Santo Domingo, and San Francisco. While these streams did not exhibit significant contamination levels, debris accumulation along their banks was common. In vulnerable situations, some families resorted to using water from these streams for their daily needs.

Regarding sanitation and hygiene promotion, over 4,000 households across 12 neighborhoods were directly or indirectly affected. Notably, two neighborhoods—Bernal Oeste and La Matera—faced specific challenges in the early recovery phase, affecting approximately 500 families.

To address water quality concerns, the municipality distributed water bottles and chlorine tablets for household water treatment.



Despite most households having access to the public water network, irregular connections and clandestine wells remained prevalent. Consequently, the distribution of household filters was deemed necessary to complement the municipality's chlorination efforts and enhance hygiene practices within the community.

In the province of Neuquén, the high turbidity of water hindered proper purification in water treatment plants under provincial oversight, resulting in a 30% reduction in distributed water volume. Approximately 30 localities experienced difficulties in accessing drinking water services, with some areas completely devoid of service.

To mitigate these challenges, measures were implemented to rationalize water supply, including scheduling restrictions for household services while tank levels were replenished. Municipalities stepped in to provide water through trucks and containers, tailored to each area's needs.

In response to the water supply disruptions, a coordinated effort was launched to collect water at various points across the province, benefiting families lacking access to the service. This initiative aimed to address the needs of at least 500 affected families, underscoring the importance of providing essential hygiene and cleaning supplies to support community resilience.

These combined actions contributed to an improved context by ensuring access to safe drinking water, promoting hygiene awareness, and delivering vital support to communities in need. Such efforts not only mitigated health risks but also played a pivotal role in advancing overall recovery efforts.

## Operational Strategy

### Overall objective of the operation

Through this DREF request, the Argentine Red Cross aimed to provide humanitarian assistance to families affected by floods in the provinces of Buenos Aires and Neuquén. The National Society assisted a total of 5,050 people (1,010 families) directly affected by the floods by implementing activities related to shelter, health, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) promotion. A total of 2,500 people (500 families) were assisted in the Province of Buenos Aires, while another 2,550 people (510 families) received assistance in the Province of Neuquén.

### Operation strategy rationale

The Argentine Red Cross, through its National Monitoring Team, conducted continuous monitoring and analysis of the emergency situation 24 hours a day. This included projections of possible impacts based on river floods and hydrometeorological events, activating additional response actions as necessary. Additionally, the National Society carried out rapid assessments in all intervention areas. These assessments complemented the official information provided by government agencies and secondary sources, contributing to the development of the DREF. As part of this intervention, detailed assessments of multisectoral needs were conducted, ensuring the collection of high-quality information to guide relevant and effective actions. At the end of the operation, a total of 1,280 families were surveyed in the municipalities of Quilmes and Neuquén. At the same time, multiple teams were deployed in the field to ensure a comprehensive response addressing the most urgent humanitarian needs of affected individuals and communities, covering any identified gaps.

Summary of the intervention:

**Shelter, housing, and settlements:** Rapid assessments were fundamental in defining the operational strategy. In Neuquén, unlike Quilmes, due to the characteristics of the areas where communities are settled, it was essential to quickly provide families with tools to remove water and clean mud from their homes. For this reason, and because the government was assisting affected individuals by increasing the amounts received in social plans, the distribution of a shelter toolkit to remove mud and begin the process of replacing or cleaning household items was determined. Priority was given to 500 families who suffered serious damage to their homes or total loss of their property. As a result, assistance was provided to 2,500 people (500 families) as follows:

Neuquén:

- Acquisition and distribution of 1x Shelter Toolkit + 2x tarps per family, reaching 483 families and 486 families each.
- Acquisition and distribution of blankets (3 per family) for 331 families.

**Health:** Assessments were conducted to identify specific needs in this sector as part of the multisectoral assessment. During the return home process and in all activities carried out by the Argentine Red Cross, first aid assistance was provided in affected areas. Additionally, first aid kits were delivered at community centers, intended for providing first aid during the emergency. Health promotion and disease prevention activities were also developed. As a result, assistance was provided to 5,050 people (1,010 families) as follows:



Quilmes:

- Distribution of first aid kits in 8 community centers.
- Health promotion activities for 2,500 people (500 families).
- First aid assistance throughout the operation (52 attentions).

Neuquén:

- Distribution of first aid kits in 6 community centers.
- Health promotion activities for 2,550 people (510 families).
- First aid assistance throughout the operation (48 attentions).

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: An assessment was conducted as part of the multisectoral assessment during the emergency. Additionally, a report on water availability and quality for families in the municipalities of Quilmes and Neuquén was issued to provide accurate information on this vital resource. Hygiene promotion activities were implemented, focusing on the dissemination of healthy habits. These activities addressed topics such as handwashing, household hygiene, food hygiene and safety, as well as measures for the treatment and safe storage of water. Water purification filters and collapsible 10-liter water jerrycans were distributed for proper water maintenance, along with hygiene and cleaning kits for the return home of affected families. As a result, assistance was provided to 5,050 people (1,000 families) as follows:

Quilmes:

- Acquisition and distribution of 1x hygiene kit and 1x cleaning kit per family, reaching 500 families.
- Acquisition and distribution of 1x water purification filters per family, reaching 250 families.
- Hygiene promotion activities for 2,500 people (500 families).

Neuquén:

- Acquisition and distribution of 1x hygiene kit and 1x cleaning kit per family, reaching 510 families and 634 families respectively.
- Acquisition and distribution of 1x water filter per family, reaching 483 families.
- Acquisition and distribution of collapsible 10L jerrycans per family, reaching 483 families.
- Hygiene promotion activities for at least 2,550 people (510 families).

CEA (Community Engagement and Accountability): The National Society was committed to prioritizing the approach of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA). Throughout the different stages of the DREF application, the participation of residents from different communities was maintained, actively contributing to the development of activities. Additionally, satisfaction surveys were conducted, resulting in a high level of satisfaction regarding the distributed humanitarian aid materials and actions carried out within the framework of emergency response, thus strengthening the institutional acceptance of the Argentine Red Cross at the community level.

## Targeting Strategy

### Who was targeted by this operation?

Province of Buenos Aires: This operation focused on helping 2,500 people (500 families) who were directly affected by the floods by implementing health, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities. In agreement and coordination with the municipality's government agencies, the National Society's response in this operation was carried out mainly in the neighborhoods of La Matera and Bernal Oeste which, according to the Undersecretariat of Emergencies of the Municipality, were the most affected areas and those that could not be directly assisted.

Province of Neuquén: This operation focused on assisting 2,550 people (510 families) who were directly affected by the floods by implementing shelter, health promotion, water, sanitation and hygiene promotion activities. In agreement and coordination with government agencies of different municipalities and the Province of Neuquén, the National Society's response in this operation was carried out in the north of Neuquén, mainly in the department of Chos Malal, and in areas close to the provincial capital (Confluencia department).

### Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The criteria taken into account for the selection of individuals to be assisted were as follows:

- Families whose homes have suffered considerable damage or destruction of personal belongings.
- Families with at least one member who has a pre-existing health condition and whose conditions generated by the flood are unfavorable to their health.



- Families with at least one member under 5 years of age, or individuals over 60 years old, pregnant women, and/or persons with disabilities.
- Families whose access to potable water has been affected by the flood.
- Families isolated by road interruptions due to river flooding.
- Complementing work with various organizations providing response and support in early recovery on the ground.
- Families displaced by floods. The specific needs of all population groups will be considered, with differentiation by age, gender, disability, and other additional differential needs and requirements.

## Total Targeted Population

Women	2,550	Rural	60%
Girls (under 18)	-	Urban	40%
Men	2,450	People with disabilities (estimated)	2%
Boys (under 18)	-		
Total targeted population	5,000		

## Risk and Security Considerations

Please indicate about potential operation risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Challenge to contrast the quantification of affected homes between the Red Cross and the municipality of Quilmes.	A multi-sectoral assessment was carried out and then cross-checked with the data of the municipality.
Inflation and the political situation in the country may have an impact on security measures for field staff or distribution.	Monitoring of the foreign exchange market and the policies and regulations established by the national government were carried out.
Delays in the receipt of humanitarian aid items	Immediate involvement of Logistics in the strategy for the purchase/transfer of supplies in order to comply with the established operational deadlines.
New rains or storms that hinder operational logistics.	Follow-up of activities by the Emergency Secretariat through its National Monitoring Team, possible immediate actions to be taken were contemplated.
Limited access to new impact data and pre-existing conditions.	Strengthened the link with government agencies by establishing effective communication channels. The information gathered was cross-checked with data from secondary sources.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

Although community integration in all the areas where the operation was carried out was complete, the main challenges faced were logistical and were resolved as they arose. In the province of Neuquén, it was necessary to adapt the vehicles to face icy road conditions, which was addressed by acquiring chains. In addition, activities were adjusted due to the fact that the time window for driving during the day was reduced by this phenomenon.

In summary, given that this was an election year, significant efforts were dedicated to communicating key messages to the communities, avoiding any association with official political parties.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?



# Implementation



## Shelter Housing And Settlements

**Budget:** CHF 59,321

**Targeted Persons:** 2,500

**Assisted Persons:** 2,500

### Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of families reached with blankets	500	331
# of families reached with tarpaulins	500	486
# of families reached with shelter tool kits	500	483

### Narrative description of achievements

In the province of Neuquén, as part of the humanitarian assistance efforts, distributions of tool kits and tarpaulins were carried out in the departments of Confluencia and Chos Malal. This was carried out in the communities of Costa de Reyes, El Porvenir, Nueva España, Villa Obrera y Vista Alegre Norte. These distributions were conducted as part of a coordinated effort between the Argentine Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations, in response to the identified needs in the flood-affected areas.

The procurement of the tool kits and tarpaulins was done through a centralized process at the IFRC regional office in Panama, which serves as a regional hub for the purchase and distribution of humanitarian supplies. Once acquired, the supplies were sent to the operational center of the Argentine Red Cross, from where their distribution to the communities in need in Neuquén was coordinated.

In Confluencia, these distributions reached a total of 362 families with tarpaulins and 359 families with tool kits. In Chos Malal, 124 families were reached with both types of assistance. However, regarding the delivery of blankets, this was limited to 331 families in the Confluencia department, as the Human Development area of Chos Malal had previously covered that need.

The distribution of supplies was carried out through an organized and coordinated process, involving volunteers and staff of the Argentine Red Cross, as well as local partners and government authorities. Distribution points were established in strategic areas of the affected departments, where the tool kits and tarpaulins were delivered to the needy families, thus ensuring that humanitarian aid reached those who needed it most in the midst of the emergency.

### Lessons Learnt

- The importance of having an agile and efficient logistical system to ensure the timely delivery of humanitarian supplies to affected communities.
- The need to improve coordination among the various entities involved in humanitarian response to streamline distribution processes.
- The importance of anticipating and preempting logistical needs, especially in emergency situations, to avoid delays in delivering aid to those in need.

### Challenges

- Overcoming Delays in Shipping Products from Panama to Buenos Aires: One of the significant challenges encountered during the humanitarian operation was the delays in shipping products from Panama to Buenos Aires. Despite being pre-positioned at the Humanitarian Hub in Ezeiza (Buenos Aires), there were significant delays in transporting the required quantity of supplies to the ground. This logistical bottleneck highlighted the need for a more robust and agile supply chain management system. It underscored the



importance of anticipating and addressing potential delays in advance, particularly in emergency situations where timely delivery of aid is critical.



**Budget:** CHF 13,419

**Targeted Persons:** 5,000

**Assisted Persons:** 5,050

## Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# people reached with health promotion activities	5,000	5,050
# of community centers receiving first aid kits	28	28
# of first aid assistance services provided	400	100

## Narrative description of achievements

- **First Aid Provision in Emergencies:** In both Quilmes and Neuquén, the provision of first aid played a critical role in addressing immediate medical needs resulting from the flooding. Trained volunteers and medical personnel were deployed to affected areas, where they administered first aid to individuals with injuries, illnesses, or other medical emergencies caused by the floods. These interventions ranged from treating minor wounds and providing basic medical care to stabilizing more serious conditions until further medical assistance could be sought. By promptly attending to medical needs, the first aid interventions helped alleviate suffering and prevent complications in flood-affected communities.

- **Acquisition and Distribution of First Aid Kits in Community Centers:** Recognizing the importance of equipping community centers with essential medical supplies, efforts were made to acquire and distribute first aid kits in Quilmes and Confluencia, Neuquén. These kits contained a range of medical supplies, including gauze, gloves, bandages, tape, thermometers, and other necessary items for administering first aid. By strategically placing these kits in community centers, they were readily available for use during emergencies, ensuring that individuals could receive timely medical assistance even in remote areas or in the absence of immediate medical facilities.

- **Health Promotion Talks:** Health promotion talks were conducted to educate individuals and communities on various health-related topics pertinent to the flood-affected areas. These talks covered subjects such as waterborne diseases, hygiene practices, mental health support, and safety precautions during and after flooding. By disseminating relevant health information and promoting preventive measures, these talks aimed to empower individuals to protect their health and well-being in challenging circumstances. The interactive nature of these sessions encouraged participation and facilitated the exchange of knowledge and experiences among community members, fostering a sense of collective resilience and support.

- **First Aid Interventions:** A comprehensive assessment identified specific medical needs within flood-affected communities, leading to targeted first aid interventions. Trained responders provided medical assistance to individuals suffering from injuries, illnesses, or other health issues exacerbated by the floods. These interventions were documented meticulously to ensure accurate reporting and accountability, enabling organizations to track the effectiveness of their medical response efforts and identify areas for improvement. Additionally, continuous training and capacity-building initiatives were conducted to enhance the skills and readiness of responders, ensuring that they could effectively address evolving medical challenges in emergency situations.

- **Acquisition and Distribution of First Aid Kits:** The acquisition and distribution of first aid kits were integral components of the medical response strategy in Quilmes and Neuquén. These kits were tailored to meet the specific needs of each community, containing essential medical supplies and equipment necessary for providing immediate medical care. By ensuring the availability of first aid kits in strategic locations, such as community centers and other public facilities, responders could quickly access the resources needed to administer timely and effective medical assistance to those in need. Additionally, ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes were implemented to assess the utilization of first aid kits and identify opportunities for optimizing their distribution and replenishment to sustain the medical response capacity in flood-affected areas.

- **Health Promotion Activities:** Health promotion activities were integrated into the broader humanitarian response efforts to address the holistic needs of flood-affected communities. Through a combination of talks, workshops, and communication materials, individuals were educated on various health topics, including hygiene practices, disease prevention, mental health awareness, and community resilience. These activities were designed to empower individuals with knowledge and skills to safeguard their health and well-being in the aftermath of the floods. Moreover, community engagement and participation were prioritized to ensure that health promotion messages



resonated with local contexts and cultural sensitivities, fostering a sense of ownership and sustainability in health-promoting behaviors within the affected communities.

## Lessons Learnt

- Flexibility in Planning: The experience demonstrated the importance of maintaining flexible and adaptable planning as the situation on the ground evolves. The initial projection of first aid provision was linked to the action plans of evacuation centers provided by local authorities. However, the early deactivation of these centers negatively impacted the projected provision of care in this area. This highlights the need for contingency plans and the ability to adjust operational strategies according to emerging needs and changes in the operational environment.

- Coordination and Effective Communication: The experience underscored the importance of close coordination and effective communication with local government authorities. The lack of alignment between action projections and the premature deactivation of evacuation centers could have been mitigated with better coordination and joint planning between humanitarian actors and local government. This underscores the need to establish clear coordination mechanisms and open communication channels to ensure a coordinated and effective response in emergency situations.

## Challenges

- Improving Articulation and Planning with Government: One of the main challenges identified was the need to improve articulation and planning with local government in coordinating evacuation centers. The discrepancy between action projections and operational reality highlighted the importance of strengthening collaboration and joint planning between humanitarian actors and local authorities. This includes early identification of needs, defining clear roles and responsibilities, and developing flexible contingency plans that can adapt to unexpected changes in the emergency situation.

- Capacity and Resource Strengthening: Another area for improvement identified was the strengthening of capacities and resources to effectively respond to unforeseen situations. The early deactivation of evacuation centers highlighted the need for more robust early warning systems and flexible contingency plans that allow for agile and coordinated responses to sudden changes in the situation. This requires ongoing investment in training, resources, and technology to ensure an effective and timely humanitarian response at all times.



## Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

**Budget:** CHF 107,405

**Targeted Persons:** 5,000

**Assisted Persons:** 5,050

## Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# people reached with Hygiene promotion activities.	5,000	5,050
# of families reached with water filters for safe water consumption	750	733
# of families reached with hygiene and cleaning kits	1,000	1,010
# of 10-liter jerrycans distributed	500	483

## Narrative description of achievements

Hygiene Promotion activities were organized through talks, workshops and communication pieces, developed together with the delivery of hygiene and cleaning kits. In addition, 2 WASH workshops were held for the volunteers of the Quilmes and Neuquén branches, respectively. 2,500 people participated in Quilmes and 2,550 in Neuquén (Chos Malal and Confluencia departments).

In Quilmes 500 hygiene and cleaning kits were delivered, while in Neuquén 510 hygiene kits and 634 cleaning kits were delivered, considering the municipalities of Chos Malal and Confluencia. Water filters were distributed to 250 families in Quilmes and 483 families in Neuquén. Jerrycans were delivered only to families in the Confluencia department, in Neuquén, reaching a total of 483 families.



## Lessons Learnt

- Agility in Humanitarian Aid Shipping from Panama: The experience highlighted the importance of promptly advancing with the shipment of humanitarian aid from Panama, especially in emergency situations. The delay in transporting supplies from the humanitarian hub in Ezeiza, Buenos Aires, underscored the need to streamline logistics processes and ensure a timely response to natural disasters.

- Efficient Planning and Coordination: The situation emphasized the importance of detailed planning and efficient coordination among all parties involved in the humanitarian supply chain. The restructuring and delay in on-the-ground activities due to the tardiness in aid arrival highlighted the need to establish clear communication and coordination mechanisms to ensure the quick and effective delivery of supplies to affected communities.

## Challenges

- Optimization of Logistics Processes: One of the main challenges identified was the need to optimize logistics processes to ensure the timely delivery of humanitarian aid to affected areas. The delay in transporting supplies from the humanitarian hub in Ezeiza highlighted the importance of identifying and addressing potential bottlenecks in the supply chain.

- Enhancement of Local Infrastructure and Capacities: Another area for improvement identified was the enhancement of local infrastructure and capacities for a more agile and effective response to natural disasters. This includes investment in transportation and storage infrastructure, as well as training of local personnel in logistics and emergency management, aiming to reduce response times and improve efficiency in the distribution of humanitarian aid.



## Community Engagement And Accountability

**Budget:** CHF 4,793

**Targeted Persons:** 5,000

**Assisted Persons:** 6,400

## Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of people reached through the dissemination of information and key messages	5,000	6,400
% of people satisfied with receiving distributions in good quality and with dignity	90	90
Number of people that participated in the needs assessment and in the prioritization of actions for a safe "return home"	4,000	6,400

## Narrative description of achievements

- Post-distribution Satisfaction Survey: After the distribution of humanitarian aid, a post-distribution satisfaction survey was conducted to assess the recipients' satisfaction with the distributed materials. A total of 417 families in Quilmes and 461 families in Neuquén expressed a high degree of satisfaction regarding the distributed materials. This feedback was instrumental in evaluating the effectiveness of the aid provided and identifying areas for improvement in future humanitarian interventions.

- Dissemination of Information and Key Messages: Throughout the distribution of humanitarian aid, efforts were made to disseminate important information and key messages to the affected communities. Initially, 824 families in Quilmes and 456 families in Neuquén were interviewed, totaling 1,280 families (or 6,400 individuals) over the entire operation. These families received information on distribution strategies for aid kits and identification of basic needs. Additionally, these same families participated in a detailed multisectoral assessment conducted by volunteers using KoBo, a data collection tool. Prior to this, volunteers received training on Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), and all field personnel were briefed using the National Society manual.

- Establishment of Communication Channels: To ensure ongoing communication between the community and the Argentine Red Cross,



email addresses, direct phone numbers, and intermediary contacts through community leaders were established. These communication channels served as vital means for addressing any concerns, providing feedback, and maintaining a continuous dialogue with the affected populations, fostering transparency and accountability in humanitarian operations.

- Follow-up Visits and Assistance: In conjunction with the aid distributions in Neuquén, visits were conducted to households that had received assistance during the initial stage of distributions from the Ezeiza humanitarian stock. These visits aimed to provide further assistance and guidance, particularly on the proper use of family filters, ensuring that recipients fully benefited from the provided aid and were equipped with the necessary knowledge to utilize the resources effectively.

## Lessons Learnt

- Importance of Adequate Connectivity: The experience highlighted the critical importance of reliable internet connectivity for conducting surveys and managing information effectively. The limited internet connectivity posed significant challenges during the data collection process using KoBo, impacting the ability to gather accurate data and delaying the subsequent systematization of information. Moving forward, ensuring better access to internet connectivity in remote or disaster-affected areas should be prioritized to facilitate efficient data collection and management during humanitarian operations.

- Need for Comprehensive Planning and Coordination: The shortcomings observed in the planning and coordination of surveys and information management underscored the importance of robust planning and coordination mechanisms in humanitarian interventions. The lack of sufficient planning and coordination resulted in data gaps, duplications, and complications, leading to increased workload and time demands during the distribution of humanitarian items. Enhancing coordination among stakeholders and establishing clear protocols for data collection, management, and reporting can help streamline operations and improve the overall effectiveness of humanitarian response efforts.

## Challenges

- Addressing Connectivity Issues: Overcoming the challenges posed by limited internet connectivity will require innovative solutions and investments in infrastructure to improve access to reliable communication networks in disaster-affected areas. This may involve leveraging alternative communication technologies, such as satellite or mobile-based solutions, to ensure continuous connectivity for data collection and information management, even in remote or underserved regions.

- Enhancing Planning and Coordination: Addressing the gaps in planning and coordination will necessitate the development of comprehensive strategies and protocols for conducting surveys, managing data, and coordinating information-sharing among relevant stakeholders. This may involve establishing dedicated teams or task forces responsible for overseeing data collection efforts, implementing standardized data collection tools and methodologies, and fostering collaboration among humanitarian actors, government agencies, and local communities to ensure a more cohesive and efficient response to humanitarian crises.



## Secretariat Services

**Budget:** CHF 11,875

**Targeted Persons:** 0

**Assisted Persons:** 0

## Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of surge personnel deployments	1	1
# of field monitoring visits conducted	3	3

## Narrative description of achievements

- Monitoring Visits Conducted: During the humanitarian operation, a series of monitoring visits were carried out, both in the field and virtually, to assess and oversee the progress of response activities. In the field, two physical visits were conducted to the areas affected by the emergency. During these field visits, interviews were conducted with community members, direct observations of living conditions were made, and the impact of humanitarian interventions was evaluated. In addition to field visits, virtual monitoring meetings were



organized to closely monitor the progress of operations and address any issues or challenges that arose. These meetings provided a platform for coordination between field teams and decision-makers, enabling an agile and effective response to changing needs in the context of the emergency.

- Deployment of Surge Personnel: As part of the humanitarian response, a deployment of surge personnel was conducted to strengthen operations in the field. This included the deployment of an additional field coordinator, who provided support to the National Society in various aspects of coordination and response management. The deployed field coordinator provided guidance and assistance in general coordination matters, ensuring smooth and effective communication between field teams, local authorities, and other humanitarian organizations. Additionally, they collaborated in the planning and execution of activities, problem-solving, and identification of emerging needs. The deployment of this field coordinator helped strengthen response capacity and ensure effective coordination among all actors involved in the humanitarian operation.

## Lessons Learnt

Importance of Regular Monitoring: The experience highlighted the critical importance of conducting regular monitoring visits, both in the field and virtually, to assess the progress of response activities. These visits provided valuable insights into the evolving needs of affected communities, allowing for timely adjustments to response strategies and interventions.

## Challenges

A major challenge identified during the response was the limited number of qualified profiles that applied for the surge alert. This shortage of qualified personnel posed an obstacle to effectively staffing the response teams and implementing activities on the ground. Addressing this challenge requires proactive efforts to attract and recruit qualified individuals with the skills and experience to support humanitarian operations. Strategies may include exploring innovative approaches to remote collaboration and leveraging digital platforms for virtual engagement can help overcome geographic barriers and broaden the recruitment base, ensuring adequate staffing levels for future surge missions.



## National Society Strengthening

**Budget:** CHF 73,166  
**Targeted Persons:** 0  
**Assisted Persons:** 0

## Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers receiving personal protective clothing and gear	230	230
# of lessons learned workshops conducted	1	1

## Narrative description of achievements

- Emergency Assessment Workshop: Two training workshops were conducted as part of the emergency response efforts. The first workshop focused on Emergency Health and involved 75 volunteers from 12 branches. The second workshop, centered on SMAPS - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, engaged 38 volunteers from 9 branches along with personnel from Headquarters.

- Distribution of Personal Protective Equipment and Visibility Items: In Quilmes, personal protective equipment and visibility items were provided to 211 volunteers from 17 branches in the metropolitan area. Similarly, in Neuquén, these items were distributed to 80 volunteers from the local branch. In total, 263 volunteers, including both volunteers and staff, participated in the development of the entire operation. Additionally, various branches from CABA and the Province of Buenos Aires were mobilized to support the actions carried out in Neuquén, along with support from the San Juan and Mendoza branches.



## Lessons Learnt

- Importance of specific profiles: The experience highlights the need for specific volunteer profiles for an effective emergency response. Identifying and recruiting volunteers with relevant skills and knowledge can significantly improve response capacity and efficiency in managing crisis situations.

- Incident report tracking: Monitoring and evaluating incident reports are essential for learning from past experiences and continually improving response protocols and procedures. This practice allows for identifying areas for improvement and taking corrective measures to strengthen response capacity for future emergencies.

## Challenges

The challenge encountered during the response was the scarcity of specialized volunteer profiles, hindering the effectiveness of the emergency response efforts. This shortage underscored the importance of having volunteers with specific skills and expertise tailored to the demands of emergency situations. Without these specialized profiles, there were limitations in addressing certain aspects of the response, potentially impacting the overall efficiency and quality of assistance provided to those affected by the emergency. Moving forward, addressing this challenge requires strategies to actively recruit and train volunteers with the necessary expertise to enhance the organization's response capabilities in future emergencies.



# Financial Report

## DREF Operation

### FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

#### MDRAR019 - Argentina - Flood June 2023

Operating Timeframe: 06 Jun 2023 to 30 Nov 2023

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2023/6-2024/4	Operation	MDRAR019
Budget Timeframe	2023/6-2023/11	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 20/May/2024

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

#### I. Summary

<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Funds &amp; Other Income</b>	<b>269,978</b>
DREF Response Pillar	269,978
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>-233,017</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>36,961</b>

#### II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items		2,875	-2,875
PO02 - Livelihoods		34,850	-34,850
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash		61,607	-61,607
PO04 - Health	46,008		46,008
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	36,157	39,494	-3,337
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery			0
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			0
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
<b>Planned Operations Total</b>	<b>82,165</b>	<b>138,826</b>	<b>-56,661</b>
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	187,813	94,191	93,622
EA03 - National Society Strengthening			0
<b>Enabling Approaches Total</b>	<b>187,813</b>	<b>94,191</b>	<b>93,622</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>269,978</b>	<b>233,017</b>	<b>36,961</b>

[Click here for the complete financial report](#)

## Please explain variances (if any)

A total of CHF 269,978 was allocated from the DREF Fund for the implementation of this DREF Operation. The Argentinean Red Cross spent a total of CHF 233,017. The remaining balance of CHF 36,961 will be returned to the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF).

It is important to explain that the final financial report of the DREF Argentina: Floods (MDRAR019) reflects expenses under the sectors PO02 - Livelihood and PO03 - Multipurpose Cash even though these two sectors were not part of the planned operation. The reason for this was incorrect coding when recording the expenses. However, it is important to emphasize that the expenses were made according to the plan.

Specifically, AP081 (cash vouchers) - CHF 57,649.73 - and AP122 (Secretariat Services) - CHF 76,200 - were used incorrectly at the moment of the transfer. However, within this amount of CHF 133,849 are the activities implemented by the National Society from Health, WASH, and PGI. Refer to complete financial report for reference.

Finally, it is worth noting that variations in financial reporting may occur due to radical changes in exchange rates, especially in the context of inflation in Argentina. Inflation can significantly affect the value of the local currency, causing fluctuations in exchange rates when translating financial data from the local currency into other reporting currencies.



# Contact Information

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[Click here for reference](#)

