

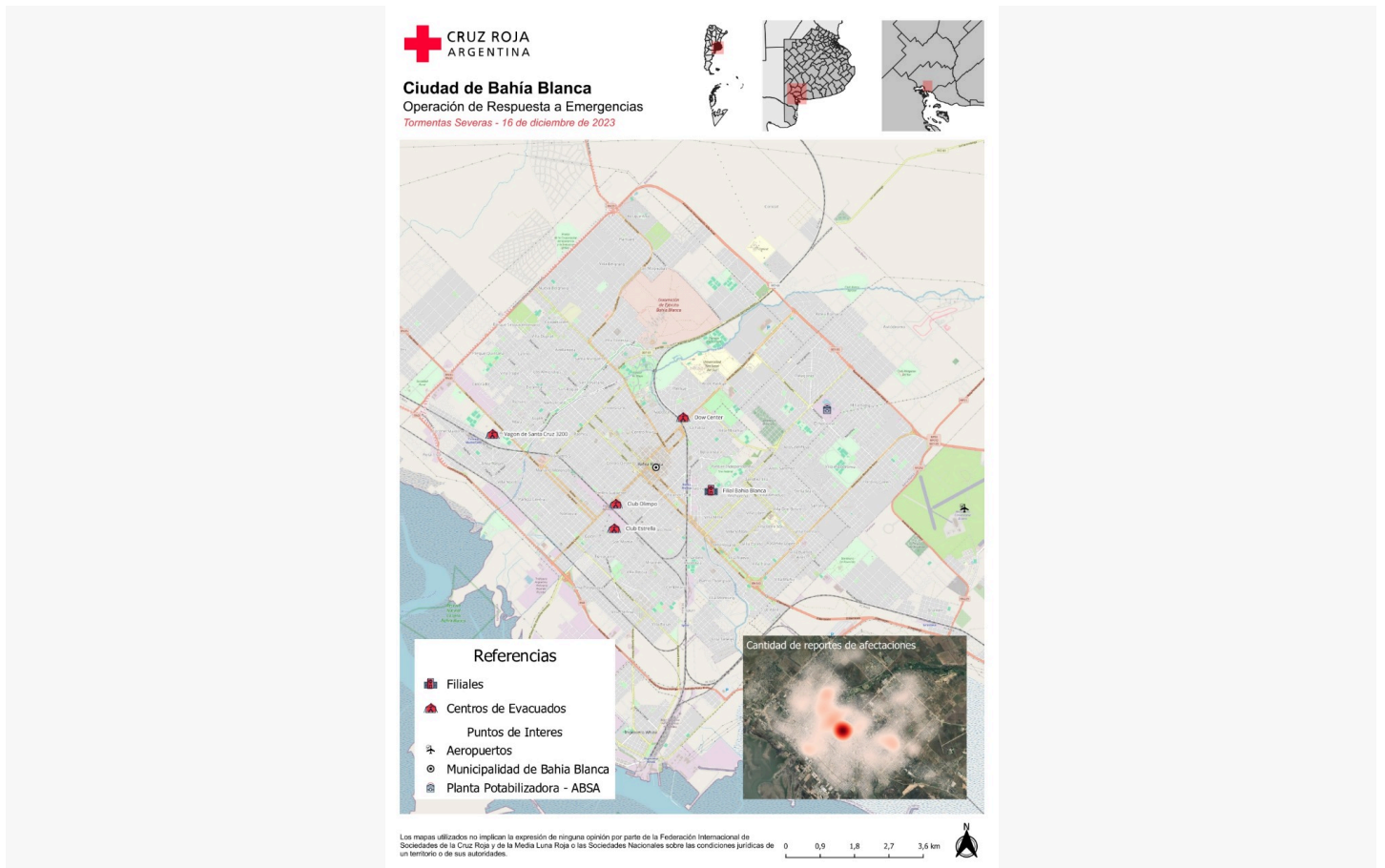


Argentine Red Cross volunteers delivering tool kits to families affected. Source: Argentine Red Cross Date: February 2024

Appeal: MDRAR020	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 339,101	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Other
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 8,000 people	People Targeted: 4,000 people	People Assisted: 4,150 people
Event Onset: Sudden	Operation Start Date: 28-12-2023	Operational End Date: 30-04-2024	Total Operating Timeframe: 4 months

Targeted Areas: **Buenos Aires**

Description of the Event



Map of areas affected and areas targeted by the National Society. Source: ARC.

Date of event

18-12-2023

What happened, where and when?

During the week of 11 December 2023, the National Meteorological Service (SMN) of Argentina issued multiple weather alerts due to atmospheric instability prevailing in various regions of the country. Additionally, Short-Term Advisories (ACP) were issued between Friday 15 December and 16 Saturday December, warning of the possibility of strong to severe storms, especially in the Province of Buenos Aires. The alert level was raised to "orange" in the SMN's Early Warning System. These alerts were complemented by forecasts from private organizations, civil society, and local agencies, anticipating a major storm with wind gusts ranging from 120 to 150 kilometers per hour depending on the region.

On Saturday 16 December after 8:00 PM, the effects of a surface low-pressure front began to manifest in southern Buenos Aires Province, extending northeastward. The storm impacted various cities in the region, with gusts in some areas exceeding 140 kilometers per hour and rainfall accumulations exceeding 100 millimeters.

From 8:30 PM onwards, the first impacts were reported in Bahía Blanca, located in the southern part of Buenos Aires Province, where gusts not only hindered access to essential services such as electricity and water but also damaged urban infrastructure and homes. The roof of Club Bahiense del Norte collapsed, resulting in the loss of 13 lives, including a 4-year-old child, and injuring more than 20 others. Significant damage to residential infrastructure occurred in neighborhoods away from the city center, with reports of roofs being blown off and masonry and walls collapsing, among other issues. This situation hampered efforts to restore electricity and delayed logistical access to water in many communities, along with early recovery operations.

The same storm affected nearby towns to a lesser extent, such as Médanos and Punta Alta. Necochea, another affected town in the province during the same period, faced winds exceeding 80 kilometers per hour and intense rainfall. These events resulted in flooding in over 60 homes, roof damage, infrastructure impacts in vulnerable areas, and fallen power lines and trees.

In the early hours of Sunday 17 December, the Greater Buenos Aires area experienced the effects of this weather phenomenon, particularly impacting Chivilcoy, Chacabuco, Campana, Zárate, San Fernando, Vicente López, Avellaneda, Quilmes, La Plata, and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires. Quilmes experienced partial collapse of Club Juventud de Bernal, roof damage, and homes affected by fallen trees.

On Monday 19 December, both the SMN and the Naval Hydrographic Service (SHN) issued new alerts for storms of varying intensity and for a historic rise in the Río de la Plata. These phenomena further complicated the restoration of basic services and exacerbated housing difficulties in areas previously affected by the storm near La Plata, Berisso, Ensenada, San Fernando, Quilmes, and Avellaneda.

Finally, on December 18, 2023, the Governor of Buenos Aires Province declared a State of Emergency (Decree 27/2023 - B20231000027), which was officially published in the Official Gazette, covering the entire province for a period of 30 days.



Argentine Red Cross volunteer and IFRC Surge team member visiting the most affected communities. Source: Argentine Red Cross Date: March 2024 Location: Bahia Blanca



Distribution of tool kits. Source: Argentine Red Cross Date: March 2024 Place: Bahia Blanca

Scope and Scale

Affected People

According to data from the Emergency Operations Center (COE), a total of 8,938 events have been reported, including roof damage, food needs, limited access to water, electrical problems, fallen poles or cables, fallen trees, among others. Among these, over 4,000 individuals have been directly affected, including those whose homes suffered significant structural damage to roofs and/or walls, as well as individuals who faced urgent situations, with minor damages or interruptions in electrical service leading to associated health needs. Additionally, indirect effects have been identified, involving individuals who experienced or were affected by situations with low life risk (e.g., prolonged power cuts without at-risk individuals at home).

Impact on Services

Regarding basic services, due to the impact on telecommunication antennas and power outages, a large number of people were affected and unable to access telephone and internet services. These outages affected both individuals and various institutions (health centers, community centers, police stations). Similarly, these disruptions limited access to water, especially in the most vulnerable communities of the city. Since the onset of the event, all 118,447 affected individuals (23,689 families) have gradually regained access to these services (within a maximum of 10 days).

Regarding maritime activity, significant damage was noted at the Port of Bahía Blanca, one of the country's main export ports, including the collapse of key communication antennas used by the Maritime Authority for naval traffic control and considerable damage to port facility access.

Household waste collection (solid waste) was carried out with reduced service due to various impacts on the service provider's personnel and their joint efforts with the Municipality to clear major city thoroughfares, among other unusual waste concerns.

Gas networks suffered minor damages with no significant impacts reported. Basic health services (hospitals, health centers, and emergency care) operated normally, thanks to efforts by the local Health Department in collaboration with provincial authorities. Additionally, six schools sustained structural damages.



Public transportation services operated on reduced schedules for over 10 days due to road closures and infrastructure damage. The city's bus terminal suffered severe damages, prompting the municipality to undertake reconstruction efforts, which have now concluded with normal operations resumed.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Needs Assessment Municipality of Bahia Blanca.	https://lookerstudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/90882254-c674-4f0a-acb4-085a8a2d4f7f/page/p_cvacg9uscd?s=mBmEWo5fBHU
2. Provincial Decree	http://www.saij.gob.ar/B20231000027?utm_source=newsletter-semanal&utm_medium=email&utm_term=semanal&utm_campaign=decreto-provincial
3. Breakdown of affected families	https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Pe4PJ0EjypOssZqjTk18J7Tznxu4PA_P&usp=drive_fs

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

Secretariat	<p>The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has a Country Cluster Delegation Office (CCD) in Argentina, which provides assistance and support to countries in the Southern Cone. This office coordinates with both the Argentine Red Cross and the Disaster and Crisis Department of the IFRC Regional Office for the Americas based in Panama. Throughout the emergency situation, there has been ongoing communication and technical assistance through the CCD, aiding in the development and implementation of this operation in financial, operational, and administrative matters.</p> <p>Through the IFRC, a member of the Mexican Red Cross was mobilized via the SURGE Logistics system to support the National Society in managing the operation. Similarly, the IFRC Logistics Hub in Panama replenished pre-positioned materials along with additional humanitarian aid items needed to complete the operation (Shelter Tools and Tarpaulins).</p>
Participating National Societies	There were no Participating National Societies (PNSs) providing support for this operation.



ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has offices in Argentina and, in addition to fulfilling its mandate, such as working with authorities to integrate, implement, and promote international humanitarian law and norms on the use of force, it also works to build the capacity of the National Society to respond to situations involving violence and crises, and to provide Restoring Family Links (RFL) services. The ICRC has been in contact with the CCD for the Southern Cone but has not provided specific support for this emergency.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

<p>Government has requested international assistance</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>National authorities</p>	<p>The Municipality of Bahía Blanca has deployed its entire structure to respond to this event; additionally, the Province of Buenos Aires has mobilized all its disaster response teams, as has the Argentine national government. Both the President of the Republic, Javier Milei, and the Governor of the Province of Buenos Aires, Axel Kicillof, accompanied by other provincial and national authorities, have been present at the Emergency Operations Center providing support to the intervening teams.</p> <p>National Level</p> <p>The National State, led by the President of the Republic and accompanied by the Minister of Security of the Nation, mobilized Federal Forces (Federal Police, Gendarmerie, and Argentine Naval Prefecture) to support prevention and security tasks in Bahía Blanca. Additionally, the National Civil Protection was mobilized to provide technical support and various logistical resources, along with mobilizing the Argentine Army and Argentine Navy in coordination and logistics tasks.</p> <p>Provincial Level</p> <p>The Province of Buenos Aires, led by its Governor, mobilized, among others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official Firefighters: Units were mobilized from Bahía Blanca, Tandil, Mar Del Plata, Quequén, Necochea, and La Plata for rescue, evacuation, and logistical operations to clear roads and reduce risks. - Ministry of Health: Various departments were mobilized, including the Integrated Emergency Medical System (SIES) and the Community Health Directorate, with ambulances, 4x4 vehicles, mobile clinics, health agents, doctors, nurses, and other resources. The Provincial Directorate of Community Health assisted the municipality in the specific assessment of affected families. - Civil Protection: The Provincial Emergency Subsecretariat mobilized civil defense units, deploying 4x4 vehicles, mobile phone charging units at critical points, and lighting towers, among others. - Security: The Ministry of Security reinforced police presence, mobilizing resources such as ecological police personnel. - Provincial Roads: Specialists were mobilized to support the restoration of provincial roads, access routes, and technical-professional analyses, providing logistical support. <p>Local Level</p> <p>The city of Bahía Blanca kept all its departments, subsecretariats, and secretariats fully operational, with 100% of human and material resources dedicated to the city's response and recovery efforts. The Mayor led response actions alongside municipal teams, coordinating efforts centered on the Operations Center.</p> <p>Regarding shelter, the local government contributed by distributing roofing sheets, nails, and beams, and increased financial assistance.</p> <p>In the field of health, in collaboration with the provincial government, needs assessments were conducted in affected areas, and three mobile health posts were established at strategic points in the city. Staffed with medical and support personnel, these posts aimed to provide emergency medical care to the affected and offer basic first</p>



	<p>aid services to the community.</p> <p>In water and sanitation matters, bottled water distribution was implemented in the hardest-hit neighborhoods, and tanker trucks were deployed to provide clean and safe drinking water at strategic points throughout the city, ensuring access to clean and safe water for communities facing significant supply challenges.</p>
UN or other actors	<p>In addition to the strong presence of the State, various actors have been involved in supporting all citizens in the response and recovery process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Federation of Volunteer Firefighters Centro-Sur supported with diverse human and logistical resources from 14 stations, deployed in the field since the beginning of the operation. - Scouts of Argentina, through different groups in Bahía Blanca and under continuous communication coordination with their national structure, assisted in local dining tasks and were available to the State. - Various local non-governmental organizations supported food distribution efforts in affected neighborhoods, preparing hot meals in many cases and serving as reception points. Over 1,500 individuals have registered in a volunteer system created by the Municipality of Bahía Blanca to aid in restoring normalcy in the city. - The City's College of Architects is supporting structural evaluation tasks and proposing temporary housing solutions. <p>In addition to these civil society actors, other organizations such as TECHO and CADENA were present in various neighborhoods through donation campaigns, collections, and other community-managed tools.</p>

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

Since the first day, the Emergency Operations Center (COE), led by the Mayor, has been operating at the Municipal Palace, with the participation of official agencies from the Nation, the Province, the Municipality and the Argentine Red Cross.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Following the severe storm with intense winds that struck the city of Bahía Blanca, the consequences on the urban fabric have been significantly devastating. Latest official records and assessments conducted by the Argentine Red Cross reveal that 1,056 roof blow-offs have been documented, with at least 600 homes suffering significant damage. These damages include not only the loss of roofing sheets and timbers but also partial or total destruction of walls, masonry, among other structural elements.

The impact has been particularly severe on the most vulnerable structures, which were in precarious conditions, where lightweight constructions have been severely affected. However, it's worth noting that middle and upper-middle-class sectors have also been affected.

The presence of fallen trees both on private properties and public roads has caused significant difficulties in accessing affected neighborhoods. Currently, based on evaluations by the Bahía Blanca Emergency Operations Center (COE), it is estimated that the number of families directly affected in terms of housing exceeds 1,600.

While many residents in the hardest-hit areas are informal construction workers and possess basic knowledge to repair their homes, they have lacked appropriate tools for home recovery. Additionally, there has been a considerable shortage of materials such as roofing sheets and timbers in the local market, due to the demand generated by adverse conditions not only in this locality but also in other areas of Buenos Aires province. Consequently, the difficulty in making necessary repairs promptly and effectively has been further exacerbated.



Health

At the close of the operation, governmental analyses have not detected any health problems directly related to the impact of the storm, beyond minor injuries; however, there is a lack of safety elements reported by families to carry out repairs to their homes. This situation



has posed a high risk of possible domestic accidents during reconstruction work due to the lack of resources and adequate tools to perform these tasks safely.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

The water service in Bahía Blanca has faced significant difficulties following the passage of the storm. While most homes receive water supply through the network, complications have been recorded due to issues with the city's pumps. These pumps, essential for water distribution, have gradually resumed operation as electrical supply, which powers them, has been progressively restored.

At the time of the completion of the operation, there was a completed restoration of the pumps and prioritization in infrastructure recovery.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through the Action Plan, the Argentine Red Cross, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, sought to provide humanitarian assistance focused on aspects related to the housing and health sectors, to families living in vulnerable areas and affected by the storm in the city of Bahía Blanca. The National Society's goal was to support 800 families (4,000 people) directly affected by this event. This support was carried out through a cash transfer program aimed at the recovery of their homes, together with training and assistance in first aid to those who have required it during the reconstruction stage, in addition to direct humanitarian aid distribution actions.

At the end of the implementation period, 4,150 individuals have been assisted through the operation's activities.

Operation strategy rationale

Taking as input the rapid assessments conducted by the National Society, the strategy aimed to address the immediate needs of families affected by the storm in Bahía Blanca, providing immediate assistance for housing reconstruction, prioritizing the safety and health of the affected individuals. All information from various agencies and organizations was consolidated through the Bahía Blanca Emergency Operations Center, enabling decision-makers to access a Power BI Dashboard.

Health: All volunteers and staff participating from the National Society were trained in community first aid. This ensured that all assessments, distributions, satisfaction surveys, talks, and workshops were conducted by trained personnel capable of providing initial care until professional medical teams arrived. Given the affected geographical area, community first aid kits were distributed at strategic points to enable basic care for potentially injured neighbors during the emergency response. Recommendations and instructions on basic care in the current context were also provided to the communities.

Multipurpose Cash Transfer: A detailed survey of affected families was conducted alongside a market and feasibility study. A unique cash transfer program was launched using pre-loaded IFRC cards to help families cover expenses for construction materials or other essential items. An amount equivalent to 380 Swiss Francs per family was allocated, considering various indicators.

Shelter: A detailed assessment of the housing conditions of the affected population was carried out as part of the family assessment process for assistance. Tool kits and plastic tarps were provided to 400 families whose homes were affected by the storm in the most vulnerable areas. Additionally, 49 tents were distributed to individuals whose homes were completely destroyed due to the storm, and who were living in cars or precarious structures with unsafe conditions.

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA): The National Society prioritized community participation and accountability in all its activities. This approach was implemented across all work areas under the supervision of the National Communication Directorate of the National Society. Communities were invited to participate in interviews during rapid assessments, and their feedback was continuously sought during the distribution of relief items to assess their utility and propose improvements. Feedback mechanisms included specific Red Cross phone lines for this operation, consultation desks at various activities, email dissemination with operation information to the community at large, WhatsApp lines for community suggestions on Red Cross actions, among others.

Volunteering:

National Teams: Activating and mobilizing volunteers from the National Intervention Team (ENI) and the National Monitoring Team



(ENMO) to the Central Headquarters and to the field has proven effective in this operation, primarily in terms of security, administrative, and operational management support.

Volunteers: A total of 183 volunteers were mobilized (103 on the ground and 80 virtually). Priority was given to mobilizing volunteers from branches near Bahía Blanca with logistical capacity and emergency training, including branches from Necochea (14 people) and Tandil (6 people). Additionally, volunteers from AMBA branches (Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area) and various points in the Province of Buenos Aires were mobilized, mostly by land transport, based on their experience in operations involving accommodation and Temporary Living Centers (PTM).

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

Through this operation, 830 families (4,150 individuals) were assisted, primarily affected by the devastating effects of the storm that hit the city. Priority was given to those who suffered total or partial destruction of their homes, and secondarily to those with individuals meeting various vulnerability criteria that complicated early recovery efforts, such as families with pregnant women, minors, elderly adults, and/or persons with disabilities within the family group.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The criteria considered for the selection of individuals to be assisted were as follows:

- Families whose homes have suffered considerable damage, total or partial destruction due to the disaster.
- Families with at least one member under the age of 18, individuals over 60 years old, pregnant women, and/or persons with disabilities, due to their increased vulnerability in emergency situations.
- Families that have not received direct assistance from other organizations, to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that aid reaches those who need it most.

The needs of all population groups were taken into account, considering age, sex, gender, and individuals with disabilities or special needs.

Total Targeted Population

Women	800	Rural	10%
Girls (under 18)	1,200	Urban	90%
Men	800	People with disabilities (estimated)	2%
Boys (under 18)	1,200		
Total targeted population	4,000		

Risk and Security Considerations

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

Risk	Mitigation action
Delays in receiving the required humanitarian aid items.	Immediate involvement of Logistics in the purchase/transfer strategy of inputs to meet the established operational deadlines.
Lack of knowledge of volunteers regarding the Cash Transfer Program.	Training and virtual workshops for volunteers on the implementation of the theme.
New rains or storms that hinder operational logistics.	Follow-up of activities from the Secretariat of Emergencies through its National Monitoring Team and constant



communication with the National Meteorological Service contemplating potential immediate actions to be taken. Currently, the National Meteorological Service maintains an alert in force for the area, expecting new winds on 24 December.

<https://www.smn.gob.ar/alertas>

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

The main security concerns included exposure to possible incidents of theft, taking into consideration the local context and previous experience in operations of this nature. As a strategy, a security sheet was prepared for field mobilizations. Likewise, communication was maintained with the police authorities and the municipality in order to ensure eventual support if deemed necessary.

In addition, the National Society was concerned about possible injuries to its volunteers and personnel during mobilizations in the affected areas. For this purpose, volunteers were provided with insurance and the necessary safety equipment to carry out the activities.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

No

Implementation



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 51,067

Targeted Persons: 2,000

Assisted Persons: 2,245

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# families reached with Shelter Tool Kits (tools and tarps)	400	400
# families reached with family tents	50	49

Narrative description of achievements

- Detailed multisectoral assessments were conducted, including a chapter focusing on housing, spanning at least three weeks with teams deployed in the field from the local Branch and other Branches, accompanied by technical teams from the Information Management area of the Argentine Red Cross Headquarters.
- Tarpaulins and tool kits were delivered to affected families in the neighborhoods of Bahía Blanca: Grünbein, Villa Talleres, Villa Talleres Sur, 9 de Noviembre, Boulevard, Tierras Argentinas, Saladero, among others. Distributions were carried out in two modalities: door-to-door delivery in easily accessible and secure neighborhoods, and at fixed distribution points in central locations within the neighborhoods, facilitating other complementary operational activities.
- Additionally, family tents were provided to individuals whose homes were completely destroyed and to those who had to relocate to other premises (host families' homes). These tents were delivered to the current location where families were residing, with support provided for their setup.
- Distribution planning was organized by the Logistics Surge mobilized to Argentina to provide support.
- One of the tents provided did not contain all the necessary elements for assembly, and therefore, it was excluded from the distributions as it was non-functional.
- The quality of the items was ensured through interviews with the recipients and by reviewing the articles that were part of the National Society's stock, as well as those items that arrived from the logistics hub in Panama.

Below is the number of families reached per neighbourhood with tarpaulins and tool kits (for each kit, 2 tarpaulins were delivered).



Grunbein: 20
 Punta Blanca: 19
 Punta del Este: 1
 Oasis: 28
 Villa Elena: 3
 Evita: 53
 Esmeralda: 3
 Spur: 2
 1810: 15
 Moresino: 1
 Villa Serra: 9
 Villa Talleres: 47
 9 de noviembre: 57
 Saladero: 28
 Barrio Chino: 6
 Boulevard: 43
 Tierras Argentinas: 37
 Nueva Argentina: 18
 Martín Fierro: 10

Lessons Learnt

- Having pre-printed forms for recipients' signature upon receipt.
- Having pre-printed materials on feedback mechanisms and community participation. This helps support the population according to their circumstances.
- Maintaining larger stock at the Argentina HUB for rapid distribution in affected communities.

Challenges

- To train the National Society's volunteers in evaluations related to the "shelter" sector in emergency contexts.



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 165,448

Targeted Persons: 2,000

Assisted Persons: 2,000

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# market and feasibility study	1	1
# of families assisted through a cash transfer program	400	400

Narrative description of achievements

- Initially, along with detailed needs assessments, family surveys were conducted focusing on selection criteria to design the Cash Transfer Program and market feasibility study. This was carried out with volunteers from the local branch and participating branches such as Necochea, La Plata, Tandil, among others, with technical support from the Central Headquarters' information management area. Volunteer teams were deployed in neighborhoods previously identified by the Bahía Blanca Branch, based on information processed by the Municipal EOC.
- The market feasibility study was conducted considering the selection criteria for assisted families and the implementation mode of the Cash Transfer Program. The option chosen was to distribute the IFRC VISA card to families.
- Before distributing the CTP cards, two training sessions were conducted for volunteers from the Bahía Blanca and Necochea branches on implementing a Cash Transfer Program. This ensured a sufficient number of volunteers available for the distribution stages.
- Once the IFRC VISA cards arrived in Argentina and families to be assisted were selected, distributions were planned between the Bahía

Blanca Branch, Logistics Surge, and a member of the National Intervention Team (ENI) of the National Society. Four fixed distribution points and a home delivery option for special cases were defined. Deliveries took place over a week, reaching the majority of the target population during these days. The distribution methodology involved individuals confirming their details upon entry, followed by a training session for families on card usage, and concluded with formal card handover and receipt signature.

- Subsequently, each card was monitored and followed up to assist individuals facing difficulties with card usage. Through this monitoring, quality of assistance was assured and the inquiries of the people were attended.

Neighborhoods and Cards Delivered:

- Grunbein: 15
 - Punta Blanca: 18
 - Oasis: 15
 - Evita: 54
 - Spur/1810/Ferro and Thomson: 35
 - Villa Sierra and Villa Talleres: 55
 - 9 de noviembre: 33
 - Saladero and Barrio Chino: 20
 - Boulevard and Ing. White: 30
 - Tierras Argentinas: 79
 - Nueva Argentina and Martin Fierro: 46
- Total: 400

Lessons Learnt

- Review, together with local teams, the selection criteria and surveys from detailed assessments, adapting them to local contexts.
- Develop a query management system that allows formal registration of each case.
- Enhance the consultation or complaint forms during distributions, enabling tracking and registration of each particular case.
- Consider expanding the number of beneficiaries in the reviews of DREF operations, based on detailed assessments commonly conducted after the launch of an Action Plan. In some cases, estimates turn out to be lower than the impact observed in detailed assessments.
- Provide "carrier" or informational leaflets with content translated into the country's language (Spanish) that is easily understandable for communities.

Challenges

The scarcity of card stock in Argentina, coupled with unfamiliarity with customs processes for their importation, delayed the National Society's receipt of the cards by more than 1 month.



Budget: CHF 11,715

Targeted Persons: 4,000

Assisted Persons: 4,150

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of first aid assistance services provided	50	80
# of first aid kits delivered in community centers	40	40
# families reached with Health Promotion activities	800	800



Narrative description of achievements

- First Aid and Health Promotion trainings were conducted during the distribution of humanitarian aid cards, reaching all program recipients.
- Throughout the assessment processes, mobilization of teams with experience in first aid enabled providing support and basic assistance to families facing various urgent situations.
- Linking communities to Primary Health Care Centers (CAPs) for management and follow-up of underlying conditions such as hypertension during the needs assessment.

Lessons Learnt

- Collaborate with state authorities to select community reference points for distributing first aid kits.
- Define the specific items that community first aid kits will include, as they differ from those required for the National Society teams in the field.

Challenges

During this operation, there was the difficulty of having a minimum pre-positioned stock of Argentine Red Cross First Aid Kits, given that the main care is carried out within the first few days of the impact of an emergency. This situation caused a delay in the distribution during the beginning of the operation.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 4,793

Targeted Persons: 3,600

Assisted Persons: 4,000

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
% of people satisfied with receiving good quality distributions and with dignity	90	90

Narrative description of achievements

- Before the distribution of CVA Cards, neighborhood meetings were organized to explain the assistance that would be provided and the distribution methodology. Community leaders, distribution center managers, volunteers, and technical teams from the Red Cross, among other stakeholders, participated in these sessions. During these events, people were informed about the operation's characteristics, the assistance they would receive, how funds would be obtained, and specific activities of the Red Cross related to the storm.
- Additionally, once the distribution dates and points were defined, notifications were sent to the beneficiaries. This task was supported by the Rosario de la Frontera Branch, whose volunteers communicated through various channels with the beneficiaries to ensure they received correct information about where, when, and how distributions would take place. After the distributions, the Rosario de la Frontera Branch processed distribution sheets and handled specific cases of individuals who couldn't attend, coordinating with the Bahía Blanca Branch to contact those families.
- All questions, inquiries, and suggestions regarding the use of CVA Cards were also handled by volunteers from the Rosario de la Frontera Branch, working together with the Bahía Blanca Branch for each case.
- Operational Communication and CEA inductions were conducted for all participating volunteers.
- Using the Monday platform, utilized by the National Society for program and project management, a consultation tracking mechanism was established for all Action Plan activities.
 - A satisfaction survey was conducted at the end of the operation among 359 families, revealing high levels of contentment with the assistance provided. Of those surveyed, 320 families reported being completely satisfied, while 39 families indicated they were "partially satisfied" with the support they received.

Regarding the timeliness of the assistance, 331 families felt the help arrived at an opportune and necessary moment. However, 27 families believed that the aid, particularly the kits, could have been delivered more quickly. One family chose not to respond to this question.



When asked about the adequacy of the assistance provided, only 2 families stated that their needs were fully met, while 357 families reported that their needs were only partially met. Additionally, 357 families indicated that no other organizations provided assistance, with only 2 families reporting receiving help from other sources.

In terms of awareness of the Red Cross prior to the emergency, 12 families knew of the organization, 25 were unaware of its existence, and 322 knew of the Red Cross but were not aware of its emergency response work.

Finally, communication clarity was rated highly, with 358 families confirming that the ways to communicate with the Red Cross were clear, and only 1 family expressing dissatisfaction in this regard.

Lessons Learnt

- Review the tools created for query management and tracking.
- Maintain printed stock regarding contact means with the National Society in emergency cases. This has allowed timely responses to queries made.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 35,768

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of field monitoring visits conducted	3	3
# of deployments of Surge Logistics	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

- Supervision visits conducted: During the humanitarian operation, a series of 3 field monitoring visits were carried out to assess and supervise the progress of response activities. These visits involved interviewing community members, directly observing living conditions, and evaluating the impact of humanitarian interventions. In addition to the field visits, virtual supervision meetings were organized to closely monitor operational progress and address any emerging issues or challenges. These meetings provided a platform for coordination between field teams and decision-makers, enabling an agile and effective response to evolving needs in the emergency context.

- Surge personnel deployment: As part of the humanitarian response, a 3-month Surge personnel deployment was conducted to reinforce logistics operations on the ground. The Logistics Officer deployed through the Surge system monitored shipments from Panama to the affected areas, mapped and tracked suppliers, supported administrative activities related to volunteer mobilization to the field, conducted operational oversight during distributions, and assisted with inventory control.

Lessons Learnt

Importance of Continuous Monitoring: Experience underscored the importance of implementing regular field monitoring visits complemented by virtual meetings with the operation team. Through these sessions, vital information was gathered regarding progress, alerts, and challenges within the framework of response activities, as well as the evolving needs of those affected. This facilitated alignment and adjustment of the scope and timeline of response interventions.

Relevance of Strengthened Coordination Between Logistics and Emergency Departments at the Headquarters, Alongside a Database of Specialized Drivers and Storage Locations with Sufficient Capacity (Ezeiza hub, municipal warehouse, and Bahía Blanca branch). This enables timely response to needs, prioritization of humanitarian aid shipments, and availability of necessary vehicles at the right moment.



Challenges

During the course of the operation, it was difficult to have updated and detailed information on the context and situations of the operation's implementation. This made it necessary to adjust the follow-up dynamics to a weekly schedule and in formats agreed with the team that has implemented the operation, together with the deployed Surge officer.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 70,311

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of lessons learned workshops conducted	1	1
# of volunteers receiving personal protective clothing and gear	180	285

Narrative description of achievements

- All participating volunteers were provided with personal protective equipment suitable for their respective field tasks; additionally, they received inductions before each field deployment.
- The Audiovisual Recording Team was able to produce various documentaries that expanded CEA tasks and showcased the National Society volunteers' work. Specific trips of the audiovisual team were undertaken to meet this goal.
- The Central Office provided continuous support to the operation through various teams.
- Mobilization of 5 national teams (4 intervention and 1 monitoring) supported improved operational management.
- During March 2024, a lessons learned workshop was conducted, attended by representatives from the Central Office, volunteers from different areas of the Bahía Blanca Branch, the General Coordination of the Bahía Blanca Branch, and members of the Board of Directors. Volunteers from La Plata and Necochea Branches were also invited due to their participation in the operation. This activity identified challenges and best practices in emergency management, proposed recommendations for future action and follow-up to the National Society and IFRC.

Lessons Learnt

Initiating the purchasing processes to replenish materials used by the National Society once the DREF operation is validated, to avoid delays during the process.

Leveraging more the tools of the National Society (technological tools like MONDAY, management tools like SIGRID) for information management.

Including satisfaction surveys for volunteers has allowed us to understand their level of satisfaction and identify opportunities for improving volunteer well-being management.

Challenges

there were difficulties in conducting the scheduled Emergency Management workshop due to the occurrence of other emergency events. In fact, at least 3 hydrometeorological events were experienced during the operation in Bahía Blanca. As a result, there was a lack of availability of facilitators, and it also led to the mobilization of various teams to other emergency areas.



Financial Report

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MDRAR020 - Argentina - Storm Bahia blanca

Operating Timeframe: 28 Dec 2023 to 30 Apr 2024

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2023/12-2025/2	Operation	MDRAR020
Budget Timeframe	2023/12-2025/2	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 09/Apr/2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	339,101
DREF Response Pillar	339,101
Expenditure	-268,526
Closing Balance	70,575

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items	51,067	41,748	9,319
PO02 - Livelihoods			0
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	163,637	210,456	-46,818
PO04 - Health			0
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
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
Planned Operations Total	214,704	252,204	-37,500
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	35,768	18,991	16,777
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	88,629	-2,669	91,298
Enabling Approaches Total	124,397	16,323	108,075
Grand Total	339,101	268,526	70,575

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

Please explain variances (if any)

A total of CHF 339,101 was allocated from the DREF Fund for the implementation of this DREF Operation. The Argentine Red Cross spent a total of CHF 268,526. The remaining balance of CHF 70,575 will be returned to the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF).

The most significant variances in the budget versus the actual expenditure include:

The National Society did not require the second disbursement stipulated in the Project Funding Agreement because factors primarily associated with resource mobilization and optimization significantly reduced operational support costs.

On one hand, an agreement with a local transportation company (Andreni) provided free transportation for humanitarian assistance. In these circumstances, the National Society had to cover the costs of transporting aid between the Humanitarian Hub in Ezeiza and the company's cargo terminal, but not for transportation between Buenos Aires and Bahía Blanca.

On the other hand, mobilization of trailer dormitories, sanitation facilities, and kitchens also reduced costs for National Society volunteers and personnel. Simultaneously, the National Society's Logistics team managed purchases at lower-than-usual costs for personal protective equipment and visibility equipment for volunteers. Additionally, many first aid supplies for assembling kits were directly managed using existing stock from the National Society.

These situations were compounded by constant fluctuations in exchange rates, which resulted in the operation costing less than budgeted, particularly in terms of support costs.

Based on this situation:

- The over-execution of CHF 46,818 in Multipurpose Cash was due to kits used during the operation being charged within this account.
- The under-execution of CHF 16,777 in Secretariat Services and CHF 91,298 in NSD was due to a cost reduction mentioned above.



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[Click here for reference](#)

