



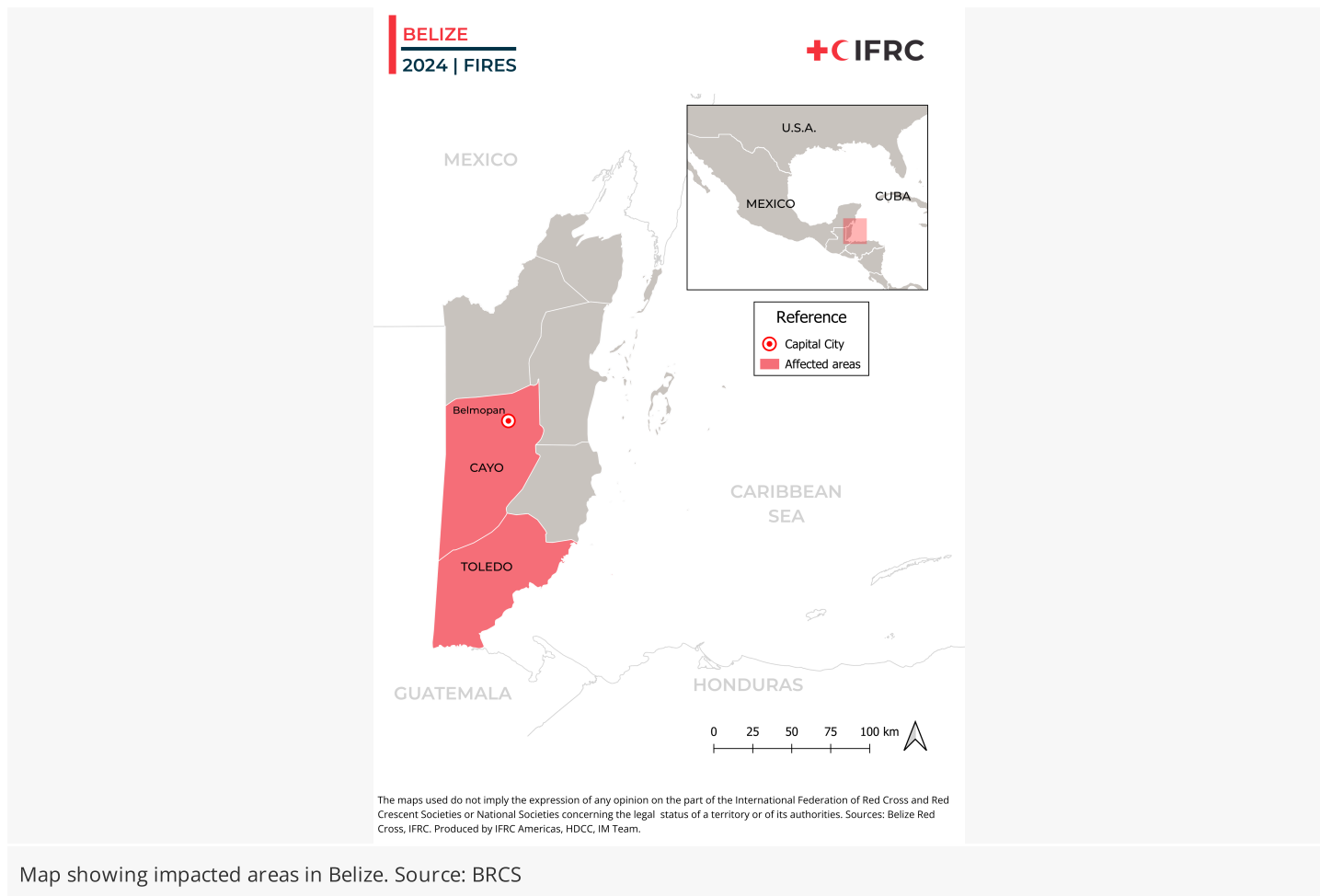
BRC staff and volunteers continue providing useful information on heat, fires, smoke and the importance of staying hydrated to villagers and students affected by wildfires in Toledo. Source: BRCS

Appeal: MDRBZ008	Country: Belize	Hazard: Fire	Type of DREF: Response
Crisis Category: Yellow	Event Onset: Sudden	DREF Allocation: CHF 158,160	
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 800 people	People Targeted: 800 people	
Operation Start Date: 06-06-2024	Operation Timeframe: 4 months	Operation End Date: 31-10-2024	DREF Published: 07-06-2024
Targeted Areas: Toledo			

Description of the Event

Date of event

26-05-2024



What happened, where and when?

Forest fires have affected Belize over the past few weeks, particularly within the Toledo and Cayo Districts. According to the initial assessment provided by the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), causal factors of the fire event in the Toledo District and Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve in the Cayo District may include human activity and/or lightning compounded with the effects of climate change, the current prolonged excessive heat wave and prevailing dry weather conditions.

On May 26, NEMO officially reached out to the Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) to request support in managing this emergency. Specifically, NEMO has requested support from the BRC to help first responders with the following:

- Deployment of first aiders to San Antonio Village to support the first responders addressing that fire;
- Protective gear such as leather boots, goggles, masks and gloves. This gear will be deployed to both the Toledo and Cayo Districts.
- Utilization of BRCS's Kobo platform and software to conduct assessments and support from BRCS volunteers in conducting joint assessments.

On May 16, the Toledo District Emergency Operations Centre was activated, and an emergency meeting was held with representatives of the Fire Department, the Forest Department, the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing, the Ministry of Transport, Belize Defense Force, Ya'axché Conservation Trust and Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE). The Ministry of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management informed that the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) had been responding to reports of wildfires affecting the village of San Pedro Columbia and adjacent communities in the Toledo District. Initial assessments were conducted, and a plan of action was created to provide immediate humanitarian support to affected families. NEMO maintained contact with the chairpersons and alcaldes of San Pedro Columbia, Crique Jute, Mafredi, and San Antonio. Aerial reconnaissance was conducted on May 17th to confirm the extent of the fire, determine the initial damage assessment, and assist in plans to contain the fire.



Based on this initial assessment and as a result of the wildfires affecting the community of San Pedro Columbia and adjacent communities in the Toledo District, the Ministry of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management and the NEMO informed that a proclamation declaring a state of public emergency for the district was signed by the Governor General on May 19.

On May 20, the Government of Belize halted classes in localities of the country that had been affected by forest fires and suffered heavy environmental pollution due to this cause. The Ministry of Education declared the measure for all schools in the Toledo district and considered the action necessary due to the poor air quality in that area.

Several local media reports document the extent of damage the fires have caused within the Toledo District. According to two media outlets, around one hundred farmers have lost their entire farms. The fires that swept through several communities in the Toledo District have left significant losses in their wake. The fires became a threat to the communities as they threatened farms in several Maya villages, starting in San Pedro, Columbia. The Belize Defense Force's Cadenas Outpost near Graham Creek had also been consumed by the fires. Deputy Commander of the Belize Defense Force, Colonel Anthony Velasquez said the soldiers had to abandon the post. These media reports are supported by the ongoing needs assessment being conducted by the national authorities, which states that "the main effects in the Toledo District were loss of livelihoods and crops, temporary displacement, inconvenience, and respiratory health issues. There are no reports of injury, loss of life, or missing person(s)." The details of the most recent assessment will be clearly articulated in the coming sections.

According to the latest needs assessment conducted by NEMO, fires in the Toledo District and in the Mountain Pine Ridge (MPR) Reserve in the Cayo District reached a peak over the period May 17-20. This resulted in a major impact on the Toledo District and the forests in the MPR during the last week. In the Toledo District, the fires mainly affected agricultural lands which poses a threat to livelihoods. In the MPR, thousands of acres of pine forest were affected.

Given that the MPR Reserve is a protected area, the Minister of Sustainable Development and Area Representative for Cayo Northeast, Orlando Habet, spoke on the threat the flames are posing to the flora and fauna in the area and the measures being taken to tackle them. Assessments are still ongoing in the Cayo District.

It must be noted that in the weeks prior to the official request, BRCS's volunteers had been activated in Toledo and assisted in providing cooked meals for the firefighters. In the Cayo District, the San Antonio community, EMT's and First Aid personnel have been deployed to provide first aid to the personnel fighting the fires. The Belize Red Cross is also actively supporting the ongoing damage and needs assessments that are being led by NEMO.

As of May 30, fires in the Toledo District continued to flare up and progress into the night due to strong winds within the area.



BRCS volunteer provide first aid to villagers of San Antonio affected by wildfires. Source: BRCS



Source : <https://edition.channel5belize.com/wildfires-destroy-cadenas-outpost-displace-several-families-in-toledo/>

Scope and Scale

The scope and scale of this event has primarily been informed by the official needs assessment that has been ongoing by the government. It should be noted that the information currently at hand represents data collected in the Toledo District and does not consider the affectation in the Cayo District. Assessments are still ongoing, and this will be updated as more information comes to hand.



According to the initial needs assessment published by the government, overall estimates indicate that approximately 190 farmers, 200 families, or 800 people are impacted within the Toledo District. This number is expected to increase as the fires are still ongoing.

Twenty-four (24) villages/communities primarily in the western portion of the district, were impacted. The villages most affected are Hicattee, Blue Creek, and San Miguel. Residential homes are mostly threatened, and fire has destroyed 2 homes in the communities of Blue Creek. Farms were primarily impacted by the fires, resulting in the loss of crops and livestock. Livestock impacted include chicks, chickens, turkeys, and ducks. Farming assets lost include barbed wire, farm sheds, storage, and spray pumps, amongst other assets. An exhaustive list of crops that have been lost includes staple cash crops such as cassava, tomatoes, plantains, sweet potatoes, and beans. Secondary impacts to residents were due to smoke/poor air quality which resulted in various respiratory conditions and the suspension of classes for students on May 20-21. The following information was taken from the initial needs assessment conducted by the government:

Toledo District:

- Health and Sanitation: There are 91 reports of respiratory illness cases. None of the health facilities have been damaged and remain accessible.
- Agriculture and food security: Of the farms that were assessed, approximately six hundred plus (600+) acres of agricultural crops and livestock are lost. The remaining villages, once accessible, will be assessed for damages/loss. It is worth noting that this period is the usual land preparation time for replanting for the upcoming crop season. However, many farmers had crops stored in the field from the previous planting season and were unable to secure their harvest before the fires.
- Building and infrastructures (housing, roads, bridges, electricity, and water supply): None reported yet
- Environment: Impact yet to be determined.

Mountain Pine Ridge

- Environment: Approximately 9,098 hectares of forest have been burned.

The Belize Red Cross Society is supporting the ongoing assessments. Utilizing the BRCS's Kobo platform and software to conduct assessments, BRCS volunteers are in the field with NEMO representatives conducting joint assessments.

Based on the affectation data at hand when drafting the operation, interventions will be limited to the Toledo District. The geographical scale of the operation may be changed as impact data in Cayo District is obtained.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Government of Belize Press office - Update on NEMO's Response to Fires Near San Pedro Columbia	https://www.pressoffice.gov.bz/update-on-nemos-response-to-fires-near-san-pedro-columbia/
2. Wildfires Destroy Cadenas Outpost; Displace Several Families in Toledo	https://edition.channel5belize.com/wildfires-destroy-cadenas-outpost-displace-several-families-in-toledo/
3. Ya'axche Field Station Surrounded By Wildfires	https://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=70328
4. Fires Trigger State Of Public Emergency In Toledo	https://www.7newsbelize.com/sstory.php?nid=70292
5. Cayo District Reports Wildfires Amid Unusual Dry Season and Extreme Heat	https://lovefm.com/cayo-district-reports-wildfires-amid-unusual-dry-season-and-extreme-heat/
6. Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve Wildfires Threaten Flora and Fauna	https://lovefm.com/mountain-pine-ridge-forest-reserve-wildfires-threaten-flora-and-fauna/
7. Government of Belize Press office - Ministry of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management Establishes National Wildfire Response Task Force	https://www.pressoffice.gov.bz/ministry-of-blue-economy-and-disaster-risk-management-establishes-national-wildfire-response-task-force/



8. NEMO speaks on wildfires causing loss of thousands of acres	https://amandala.com.bz/news/nemo-speaks-on-wildfires-causing-loss-of-thousands-of-acres/
9. Government of Belize Press office -NEMO Responds to Fires Near San Pedro Columbia	https://www.pressoffice.gov.bz/nemo-responds-to-fires-near-san-pedro-columbia/

Previous Operations

Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years?	No
Did it affect the same population group?	-
Did the National Society respond?	-
Did the National Society request funding form DREF for that event(s)	-
If yes, please specify which operation	-
If you have answered yes to all questions above, justify why the use of DREF for a recurrent event, or how this event should not be considered recurrent:	
-	

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

22-05-2024

Multi Purpose Cash	Over the past few months, the Belize Red Cross Society has been part of the Country Cluster Delegation in Port of Spain (POS CCD's) pilot programme for Cash Preparedness in the region. With the support of the Cash focal points from the ARO, the POS CCD, and the National Society, they have been developing a plan of action to advance CVA at the NS. This includes the completion of the calculations to determine the transfer value in emergencies. This value will be utilized for this operation.
Health	At the request of NEMO, the BRCS has also mobilized their first aid teams in support of injured firefighters and those in the community. Thus far, at least 4 first aid personnel have been deployed. Over the coming days, a total of 2 teams of 6 people each will be deployed to support first aid efforts across affected communities.
Coordination	The Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) has been in close coordination with the NEMO and with the IFRC to support those most keenly affected by the ongoing wildfires. The scope, scale, and targeting for this operation will be determined by the needs outlined in the ongoing needs assessment. The NEMO has also reached out to the BRCS with specific needs as it relates to supporting first responders in the execution of their duties. Coordination with the Belizean authorities will continue throughout the life of the operation.
National Society Readiness	The Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) has mobilized its volunteers following the call for support from the NEMO. This includes support to first responders through the provision of meals. The National Society reports that over 160 meals have been distributed. The NS has also shared its initial stock report, which boasts the following in line with the current needs assessment across their two warehouse spaces:



	<p>Hygiene Kits- 557 Cleaning Kits- 500 Kitchen Sets -712 Face shields - 4200 Surgical Gowns – 12,800 First Aid Kits - 30</p> <p>These items will be utilized in support of initial efforts and replenished.</p>
Assessment	<p>The National Society has also been responding to NEMO's request to support the needs assessment and data collection process. The BRCS is supporting by collecting data using their KoBO platform. Volunteers with the required access credentials to the platform started to accompany NEMO on joint assessments on May 28. The results would then be shared.</p>

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	<p>The IFRC's Port of Spain Country Cluster Delegation is in close contact with the Belize Red Cross Society. On May 26, a meeting was held with the national society and counterparts in the Americas Regional Office to assess the situation and chart a way forward. Based on these discussions, a decision was made to support the Belize Red Cross in their application for an IFRC-DREF in response to the wildfires that have been affecting both the Cayo and Toledo Districts. The POS CCD will continue to support the Belize Red Cross Society in the further development of the plan of action that may be revised based on the currently ongoing needs assessments.</p>
Participating National Societies	<p>The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) is supporting the assignment of a specialist for remote support to assist with the completion of the CVA Preparedness (CVAP) plan of action for the BRCS. This demonstrates their commitment to collaboration with the region and disaster readiness. In addition, the CRC has confirmed the availability of their CVA roster to support Belize in emergency operations.</p>

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

ICRC is not present in country

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	<p>Operations/Mobilization of Resources NEMO Emergency Committees are in the affected area to assist the affected population through the Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis Committee, Search and Rescue (Fire Suppression) through the Fire Department and the Belize Defense Force.</p> <p>Assistance Items Based on preliminary assessments, assistance will be required for the affected population in the agriculture sector. Humanitarian assistance that will be required are food, water and hygiene products. Additionally, livelihood support over the next 3-6 months will be necessary. This will include agricultural support in several forms.</p> <p>The Ministry of Blue Economy and Disaster Risk Management also announced the formation of the National Wildfire Response Task Force on May 24. Led by the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), the Task Force will provide immediate</p>



response to wildfires affecting Belize, particularly those in the Toledo and Cayo districts.

The Task Force met and is coordinating several operations across the country, including improvement of fire passes in the Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve, response to threats in the Eljio Panti National Park, and continued support of communities in the Toledo District being affected by fires.

The National Wildfire Response Task Force is comprised of the National Fire Service, the Forest Department, the Association of Protected Management Organizations (APAMO), the Belize Tourism Board, the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing, the National Association of Village Councils, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise, the Belize Defence Force and Astrum Helicopters.

The NEMO has also reached out to the Belize Red Cross to support the national efforts in combating the wildfires.

UN or other actors

-

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

As a CDEMA member state, Belize's NEMO is connected to CDEMA's response system. In response to a call for support from NEMO to CDEMA, a meeting of the Caribbean Development Partners Group – Disaster Management was convened on May 28. During this meeting, humanitarian partners active and present in the region were appraised of the ongoing situation and ongoing national actions in Belize by the Director of NEMO. CDEMA and partners throughout the region, including the Red Cross, informed the cohort of ongoing and planned interventions in support of the current situation. Another meeting is planned for May 31, 2024.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

Agricultural land in the Toledo District has been most keenly affected by the wildfires. Farms were primarily impacted by the fires, resulting in the loss of crops and livestock. Livestock impacted include chicks, chickens, turkeys, and ducks. Farming assets lost include barbed wire, farm sheds, storage, spray pumps amongst other assets. An exhaustive list of crops that have been lost includes staple cash crops such as cassava, tomatoes, plantain, sweet potatoes, and beans. A full list of impacted crops and the estimated monetary damages have been provided in the needs assessment. The estimated total value of losses to the agricultural sector by the Forestry Department in Belizean dollars is 8 million dollars. Of the farms that were accessible, approximately six hundred plus (600+) acres of agricultural crops and livestock were lost. In addition, this period is the usual land preparation time for replanting for the upcoming crop season. However, many farmers had crops stored in the field from the previous planting season and were unable to secure their harvest before the fires.

Based on the information provided and local media reports, farmers will be in need of livelihood support. One farmer in San Pedro Colombia noted: "We gotta go back and plant back, start back at square one; we have to just plant all the trees that we lost, all the corn, the beans, everything. Some farmers are, if you can see, it's all burnt. The avocado tree over there, the cacao tree, it's all dry, it's all gone, so now we have to start back, we have to plant back again". Livelihood interventions will take the form of multipurpose cash grants that will allow those most keenly affected to make their own decisions regarding their main needs in rebuilding their lives and livelihoods.

It should be noted that at the time of the initial damage assessment conducted by NEMO, not all farmers were available. Therefore, upon completion of those assessments, more communities might be identified, which will increase the number of communities needing assistance.



Health

The National Disaster Office, NEMO, has requested support from the Belize Red Cross Society with the mobilization of their First Aid Teams to support community first responders in addressing the fires. The main needs are anticipated to be the treatment of burns of various degrees, smoke inhalation, and eye irritation due to prolonged exposure to ash and smoke. In this regard, there is a need to ensure the safety of those who are in the field through the provision of the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). They also require the relevant tools to effectively execute their tasks. This includes additional first aid kits that are properly outfitted to support burns.



The NEMO has specifically requested support from the Belize Red Cross Society in the provision of the following items: Protective gear such as leather boots, goggles, masks, and gloves. This gear will be deployed to both the Toledo and Cayo Districts.

The psychosocial impact on those who have lost their livelihoods is expected to be great. A media report recounts the lamentations of a local farmer who stated that “it’s so sad for some of the people that are so far in the jungle with their crop trying to do their best but it’s very difficult to assist them there” and called the described the destruction the fire caused, “devastating”.

There have been reports of increases in respiratory illness. However, this will not fall under the purview of this operation. The health facilities have not been damaged or impacted and remain accessible.

There have been no reports of damage to water supplies that would lead to any health-related issues.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

In their initial needs assessment and in the Caribbean Development Partners Group (CDPG) meeting held on May 28th, 2024, NEMO indicated that there was a need for hygiene and cleaning kits. The Belize Red Cross Society currently holds a cache of prepositioned stock that includes these items. As such, support will be provided through the provision of these products.



Community Engagement And Accountability

The integration of minimum actions on Community Engagement and Accountability within the operation is a key success factor for an adequate response. Engaging community members in decisions regarding their own needs ensures that the perspectives of all groups, particularly those most affected are considered. By involving the community, the affected population can help identify specific local challenges and develop tailored solutions that are more likely to be accepted and supported. This CEA approach ensures that interventions are culturally appropriate and effective. Furthermore, it fosters active community participation builds a sense of ownership and responsibility.

Communication and coordination with local management authorities also play a vital role in appropriately facilitating the needs of the community, as they reduce duplication of efforts and community fatigue. Accountability is enhanced through coordination with mutual authorities, as greater transparency reduces the potential for mismanagement and encourages the spirit of good faith and collaboration amongst agencies in the service of humanity. The Belize Red Cross Society and NEMO are both actors in the humanitarian landscape. The Director General of the BRC and the National Emergency Coordinator of NEMO are in constant contact with each other via the telephone and email. They keep each other abreast of progress in combating the wildfires and on emerging needs. The BRC has also been invited to take part in national coordination meetings. This collaborative approach not only improves the effectiveness of emergency management strategies but also builds trust and cooperation between communities and authorities, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and accountability.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

It is worth noting that some areas have not been assessed given that the fires are still ongoing. As such, assessments are expected to continue in the affected districts once fires are extinguished. Thus far, most of the affectation data has come from the Toledo District and scarcely take into account the Cayo District. Given the geographical scale of the impact, it is estimated that more than the currently reported 200 families or 800 people have been impacted by the wildfires. Once assessments are finalized, this DREF operation may scale up.

[Assessment Report](#)

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this IFRC-DREF, the Belize Red Cross Society aims to support 200 families (800 people), primarily farmers, who have lost their crops due to the fire, as well as 50 community first responders, at the request of NEMO, who are supporting firefighting efforts over 4 months. Assistance will be provided through the implementation of activities in Health, WASH, and Multipurpose Cash Assistance with a



focus on a cross-cutting CEA approach.

At this time, interventions will be limited to the Toledo District based on the initial needs assessment conducted. However, it is worth noting that it is expected that the number of people and families affected by the wildfires is likely to increase as assessments continue not only in the Toledo District but also in the Cayo District.

Operation strategy rationale

The development of this IFRC-DREF Action Plan is grounded in insights provided by the Belize Red Cross Society media coverage, the initial needs assessment conducted by the NEMO and the request for assistance by the NEMO to the BRCS. It is important to highlight that needs assessments by the government across both impacted districts of Toledo and Cayo are still ongoing. These assessments will complement existing information and guide the planned actions and scalability of the operation to better aid the most affected population.

The Belize Red Cross Society recognizes the critical importance of addressing the extensive impact on affected households and families, necessitating a comprehensive response. As such, the summary of the intervention by sector is as follows:

HEALTH

- Provision of PPE for 50 community first responders and 12 first aiders
- Provision of 30 first aid kits (for replenishment)
- Provision of Psychosocial Support (PSS) for first responders, community and volunteers
- Dissemination of key health prevention and mental health messages to community members

Interventions in this sector will be through the provision of personal protective equipment, first aid, key health prevention messages through community activities, and mental health care and psychosocial support services. Health actions are aimed mainly at residents in affected areas and emergency teams deployed in the field. Furthermore, mental health and psychosocial support actions (MHPSS) are geared towards aiding families grappling with the loss of homes and loved ones due to the emergency.

In addition, provision of protection gear (boots, gloves, masks, goggles) will be provided for the community first responders and first aiders. It must be noted that PPE is being procured locally. Therefore, costs attributed to these items were sourced with the support of the National Society. The NS also has first aid kits in stock that will be given to the First aid teams to support their work. The kits will be replenished via the Regional Logistics Unit.

WASH

- Provision of 200 Hygiene Kits (for replenishment)
- Provision of 200 Cleaning Kits (for replenishment)

In line with the request from NEMO, this operation will support the provision of hygiene and cleaning kits. The wildfires have left a path of destruction in their wake. It is important to maintain safe and hygienic environments, even in the most difficult circumstances. Therefore, cleaning and hygiene kits will be provided to support these efforts. The National Society also has both hygiene and cleaning kits in stock that will be donated to the NEMO to support their work. The kits will be replenished via the Regional Logistics Unit.

MULTIPURPOSE CASH:

- Feasibility Study to support the feasibility and plan of the CVA Program.
- Provision of multi-purpose cash grants to 200 affected families.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the cash transfer program.
- Post distribution monitoring survey of assisted persons.

Thus far, assessments show that these wildfires have primarily impacted agricultural land across the Toledo District. Lives and livelihoods have been most keenly affected by the destruction of farmlands, that have eliminated key cash crops for several farmers. Considering that the needs of no one individual or household are the same, being given the choice of what to purchase plays a vital role in preserving people's dignity. Based on this and the experience of the National Society, a Cash and Voucher assistance (CVA) program will be implemented.

The multipurpose cash transfer program aims to reach 200 families (800 people) affected by the wildfires. Over the past few months, the Belize Red Cross Society has been part of the POS CCD's pilot program for Cash Preparedness in the region. With the support of the Cash focal points from the ARO, the POS CCD and the National Society, they have been developing plan of action to advance CVA at the National Society. This process involves completing calculations to determine the transfer value in emergencies and the necessary feasibility and market assessments. Calculating the transfer value is a comprehensive task that incorporates various factors. It includes the latest food cost data from the Statistical Institute of Belize, as well as the cost of essential non-food items like basic services. Minimum labor wages and inflation rates, sourced from reliable governmental sources, are also considered to ensure the value reflects current



economic conditions. The cash transfer value has been calculated to be 538 BZD (238.00 CHF), which will be rounded up to 250.00 CHF.

In addition, as part of the CVA preparedness plan, a Financial Service Provider (FSP) mapping has been completed and are in the final stages of securing a service contract. If this option is delayed, the National Society will replicate the delivery method used in the last IFRC-DREF, which was checks, or request the use of a global service provider contracted by IFRC. It is worth noting that both the transfer value and delivery method will be confirmed in the feasibility study and the most suitable will be selected.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Community feedback mechanisms, including post monitoring distribution survey
- Community focus group meetings

In coordination with ARO, community engagement in the response will be ensured through timely sharing of clear information about response activities, selection criteria and distribution processes with communities through community meetings. This will be particularly important in cash-based interventions. The Belize Red Cross Society has trained volunteers in communications in emergencies and in CEA. All sensitive feedback will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by CEA focal point volunteer. CEA will be integrated in all phases of the operation. The National Society prioritizes community participation and accountability approach in all its activities. Among the activities prioritized in the early response and recovery strategy are those related to community participation in the different stages of the processes, the dissemination of information and key messages and the establishment of feedback mechanisms at the community level. Additionally, feedback mechanisms and satisfaction surveys will be carried out to strengthen the National Society's interventions in the future.

To ensure the targeted to the population to be assisted, meetings will be held with community focus groups to ensure that the intervention is accomplishes Sphere Standards. Special attention will be given to children under five years of age, pregnant women and nursing mothers, the elderly, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and the LGBTIQ+ community, among others.

At community level, the Belize Red Cross Society plans to implement various community participation and accountability strategies through the different sectors of the operation. These include complaint and denunciation boxes, testimonial histories, and monitoring of deliveries in the distribution. In case there is a sensitive case, it will be coordinated with the PGI ARO focal point to handle it appropriately.

In addition, printed flyers will be used to provide clear and accurate information on the money transfer program (guidance on the use of the cards at the ATM, a WhatsApp line for queries and a contact email). This strategy will also involve an exit survey through the Kobo platform, where people will be able to express how they have been served by the Red Cross and the relevance of the assistance, which will result in understanding the needs and preferences of users and identifying what needs to be improved in the services provided by the Belize Red Cross Society, and ensuring the voice of the community at the lessons learned workshop.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

Through this operation, the Belize Red Cross Society aims to target 200 families (800 people) in the Toledo District, which has been most affected by wildfires. Given the impact data at hand, it is estimated that the farming community in Toledo will form the main target population for this intervention, particularly as it relates to the provision of CVA assistance.

According to the Statal Office of Belize, the population in the Toledo District is 30,785 with the ratio of males and females being roughly 50/50. The target therefore does not significantly represent the population of these areas. However, the target is guided by the initial needs assessment conducted by NEMO. It is worth highlighting that assessments are ongoing with the support of the Belize Red Cross Society. The BRCS has been utilizing its KoBo platform and software to conduct assessments and the data shared with NEMO. Based on this, the official data presented by NEMO is considered to be endorsed by the Belize Red Cross Society.

Following the completion of the assessment, the results will be communicated, and an operational update, including budget, will be completed within the first 2 months of the operation.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The initial needs assessment provided by NEMO indicates that 200 families (800 people) have been impacted within the Toledo District. However, fires are still burning, and assessments are still being conducted. Given the fact the fires are continuing to impact the population, as assessments continue, it is estimated that the affected population data is expected to increase.



This current target only takes into consideration the Toledo Districts as fire suppression effects are still active. According to the initial needs assessment, livelihood support over the next 3-6 months will be necessary. Therefore, priority will be given to individuals and families that have suffered significant losses to their livelihoods due to wildfires.

The selection criteria for the CVA program will take into consideration the following:

- Socioeconomic vulnerability due to loss of livelihood: as per the needs assessment, several families have lost their farms
- Exclusion from State Aid: Priority will be given to individuals who are not receiving or are not eligible to receive aid from government sources. At this time, there is no clear indication as to how the government means to support those who have lost their livelihoods. It has, however, been documented as a need. The Belize Red Cross Society will therefore collaborate with the government via NEMO to ensure that interventions are aligned and symbiotic.
- Specific needs: Priority will be given to those with specific needs, such as individuals with disabilities, the elderly, single-parent families, and other vulnerable groups.

Total Targeted Population

Women	400	Rural	-
Girls (under 18)	0	Urban	-
Men	400	People with disabilities (estimated)	1%
Boys (under 18)	0		
Total targeted population	800		

Risk and Security Considerations

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

Risk	Mitigation action
Given the nature of the hazard, there is a risk that those sent into the field to support with first aid may sustain injuries themselves due to exposure to hazardous conditions.	-All personnel sent into the field will be trained in first aid and their certification up to date - Provide adequate personal protective equipment, such as gloves, long-sleeved shirts, thick pants and safety shoes. - Mandatory use of masks with particulate filters to protect personnel's respiratory tract.
The needs assessment is being driven by the government. As the fires continue, this may delay continued assessments in affected districts.	Coordinate closely with local authorities and community leaders to facilitate information gathering and ensure a timely and effective response to identified needs.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

In the context of the operation to address the wildfires in Belize, there are additional safety and security issues that must be carefully addressed to ensure the effectiveness of the humanitarian response. The most pressing concern is the threat of the ongoing fires. The operation is being conducted in an environment affected by active wildfires, which may pose an ongoing risk to the safety and security of response personnel and affected communities. Robust safety measures and effective evacuation protocols must be implemented to protect teams in the field.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

No



Planned Intervention



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 54,954

Targeted Persons: 800

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of families reached with multipurpose cash transfer programme	200
Percentage of households receiving cash transfers who are satisfied with the amount and the timeliness of the assistance provided	80
Number of multipurpose cash feasibility assessments conducted in total	1
Percentage of requests for support received by cash help desk solved	80

Priority Actions

- Provision of multi-purpose cash grants to 200 affected families.
- Post distribution monitoring survey of assisted persons.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the cash transfer program.
- Feasibility Study to support the feasibility and plan of the CVA Program.



Health

Budget: CHF 30,747

Targeted Persons: 300

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of community first responders provided with PPE	50
Number of first aid responders provided with PPE	12
Number of community members informed with key prevention health messages	300
Number of people (first responders, community, and volunteers) assisted through psychosocial support services	100

Priority Actions

- Provision of PPE for 50 community first responders and 12 first aiders (boots, goggles, masks and gloves)
- Provision of 30 first aid kits (for replenishment)
- Provision of PSS for first responders, community and volunteers





Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 19,383

Targeted Persons: 800

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of hygiene kits distributed	200
Number of cleaning kits distributed	200

Priority Actions

- Provision of 200 Hygiene Kits (for replenishment)
- Provision of 200 Cleaning Kits (for replenishment)



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 1,864

Targeted Persons: 640

Indicators

Title	Target
% people satisfied with receiving distributed items of good quality and with dignity	80
Number of community consultation meetings	5

Priority Actions

- Community distribution feedback mechanism including post monitoring distribution survey (80% of the max target of 800 people)



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 28,755

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of SURGE personnel support the operation	1
Number of IFRC monitoring and support missions	3



Priority Actions

- Deployment of 1 SURGE personnel: 1 x Operations Manager for 2 months
- IFRC Monitoring visits
- Development and execution of communications strategy
- Videography services to document the operation



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 22,458

Targeted Persons: 50

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of volunteers involved in response who are insured	50
% of operational staff and volunteers receiving a security briefing	100
Number of Lessons Learned Workshops	1

Priority Actions

- Provision of Volunteer Insurance
- Volunteers are brief on safety and security
- Lessons Learned workshop

About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

The Belize Red Cross Society currently has approximately 50 active volunteers who can support the operation. This includes to the 12 first aid responders who will be mobilized in response to NEMO's request. The Director General of the National Society, who has extensive experience in disaster response, will have overall oversight and will set the direction of the operations in coordination with an Operations Manager requested through SURGE. The operation will also be supported by a finance officer, field/first aid coordinator, and the volunteer manager appointed by the National Society with 50% of their time to support the operation. These people will all be intricately involved in supporting the operation alongside the IFRC Operations Manager.

Will surge personnel be deployed? Please provide the role profile needed.

SURGE support has been requested for this operation. 1x Operations Manager with CVA experience will be needed for 2 months.

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

This operation will be supported primarily by local procurement. Given the nature of the requested items and the expediency with which they are required, local procurement is the most effective and expeditious option. The Belize Red Cross Society follows the established IFRC procurement guidelines and regulations as a standard practice. As such, all procurement related to this operation will follow the IFRC's standard procurement procedures and Sphere Standards for household item purchases. The National Society and IFRC POS CCD will coordinate with the Americas Regional Logistics Unit for any major procurement. This constant coordination will also ensure that there is The strict adherence to the established protocols. The Belize Red Cross Society enjoys tax exemption on imported goods.



How will this operation be monitored?

Reporting on the operation will be conducted in accordance with the IFRC's minimum reporting standards. A final report will be issued within three months of the operation's completion. A lessons learned workshop will form part of the operations activities and will be presented to the implementation team. The IFRC POS CCD has also adopted a country-focused approach as part of its working modality. As such, the Country Plan Manager (CPM) with responsibility for Belize will be dedicated to supporting the team and the operation. The CPM and the wider team will also have the support of the POS CCD's Organisational Transformation Team which includes the Emergency Response Focal Point for the Cluster. Monitoring visits by IFRC staff have also been included as part of the monitoring methodology. The IFRC's PMER and finance team will also provide regular and close support and guidance to the National Society's operations team to ensure that IFRC policies and procedures are followed during the implementation of the planned activities under the IFRC-DREF.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The Belize Red Cross Society will assign a volunteer to act as a Communications Focal Point. With the guidance of the Americas Regional Office, general coverage of the operations will be provided through press releases, dissemination on social networks, videos, interviews etc. Where possible, media houses will be invited to the field during the implementation of distributions. The National Society's social media platforms will also serve as a hub for accurate and timely information on the operation.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRBZ008 - Belize Red Cross Society
Belize: Fires

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	106.947
Shelter and Basic Household Items	0
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	54.954
Health	30.747
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	19.383
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	0
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	1.864
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	51.213
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	28.755
National Society Strengthening	22.458
TOTAL BUDGET	158.160

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



Contact Information

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

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IFRC Appeal Manager: Marissa Soberanis, Organizational Transformation Coordinator, marissa.soberanis@ifrc.org, +1 (868) 708-6752

IFRC Project Manager: Milagros Lopez Marreros, Country Plan Manager, milagros.lopez@ifrc.org, +51 940 432 122

IFRC focal point for the emergency: Rhea Pierre, Technical Officer - Evolving Crisis and Disaster, rhea.pierre@ifrc.org, +1-868-622-4700

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[Click here for the reference](#)

