



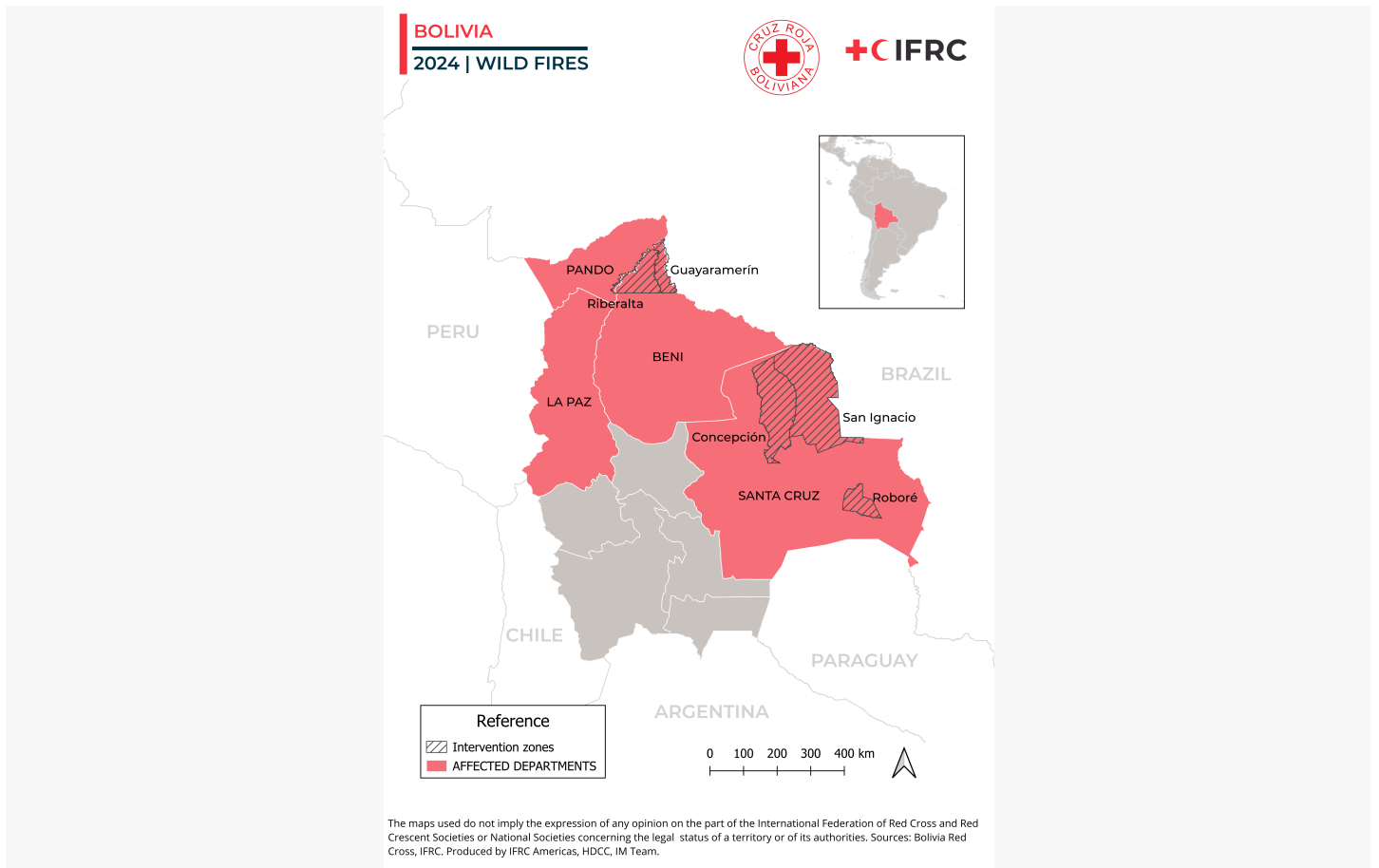
First aid attention for first responders, Bolivian Red Cross, Santa Cruz branch. August 2024.

Appeal: MDRBO017	Country: Bolivia	Hazard: Fire	Type of DREF: Response
Crisis Category: Yellow	Event Onset: Sudden	DREF Allocation: CHF 250,580	
Glide Number: WF-2024-000134-BOL	People Affected: 25,335 people	People Targeted: 2,500 people	
Operation Start Date: 21-09-2024	Operation Timeframe: 4 months	Operation End Date: 31-01-2025	DREF Published: 23-09-2024
Targeted Areas: Beni, Santa Cruz			

Description of the Event

Date of event

08-09-2024



Affected Departments and Areas of Intervention. Source: Bolivian Red Cross, IFRC.

What happened, where and when?

As of mid-July 2024, Bolivia experienced a rapid increase in the intensity of forest fires, with the highest incidence in the eastern departments of Santa Cruz and Beni. According to data from the Heat Foci Monitoring System (SIMB), as of 10 September, more than 46,536 heat spots were registered, with 80% concentrated in Santa Cruz.

An analysis by UNOSAT (United Nations satellite center) reveals that, on that same date, around 11,400 people resided within a radius of 500 meters from the hot spots, exposing them to health and safety risks. At the national level, the Ministry of Environment and Water (MMAyA) reported fires in 27 municipalities and an affected area of 3,872,498 hectares, of which 59.4% corresponded to the department of Santa Cruz and 37.7% to the department of Beni. 40% of the affected area is forest and 60% pastureland.

According to the situation report of the Humanitarian Country Team as of 11 September, active fires are concentrated in the municipalities of Concepción, Urubichá and Ascención de Guarayos, in the department of Santa Cruz, and San José, in the department of Beni.

The severity of the situation led the government to declare a state of national emergency on 8 September (Supreme Decree No. 5219), due to the impact on the environment, public health, biodiversity, and the productive activities of the population. At least 54 municipalities were affected, of which 23 declared a state of disaster and 5 a state of emergency (1).

The fires have significantly impacted the health of the population, with a significant deterioration of air quality in regions such as Cobija (Department of Pando), Beni and Santa Cruz, reaching extremely dangerous levels. In response to this situation, the Ministry of Education recommended the virtual modality for schools in these departments, due to the impact of smoke on the health of students.

As of 16 September, 25,335 people (5,067 families) were officially reported by the Vice minister of Civil Defense as affected and according to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) at least 124,000 exposed, although it is estimated that these figures could be higher due to difficulties in collecting data in remote areas. At least 60 homes were affected, and two deaths were reported.

The forest fires have had a significant impact on local communities, causing damage to infrastructure, livelihoods, and water systems. According to reports from the Bolivian Red Cross, several communities have seen their homes and livelihoods affected. Priority needs identified include food, medicines, drinking water and reconstruction materials.

To deal with this emergency, the government has deployed a major firefighting operation, involving more than 3,195 forest firefighters and 8 aircraft that have discharged 1,176 water releases. National and international coordination mechanisms have also been activated, receiving support from countries such as Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Peru and Venezuela.

The health sector has responded by attending to more than 6,326 cases, but the magnitude of the emergency has exceeded the system's response capacity. The Government has requested international support specialized in emergency management, as well as equipment, tools and supplies to fight the fires and assist the affected populations. In addition, food has been requested to meet the needs of at least 10,000 people.

Despite the efforts made by the Government and relief agencies, the situation remains complex as the drought in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni could extend beyond October, increasing the risk of fire spread. Finally, it is expected that the full recovery of damaged ecosystems and the reconstruction of communities will require a joint, long-term effort by regional and national governments and humanitarian organizations.



Volunteers extinguishing fires. Source: BRC, Guayaramerin Branch.



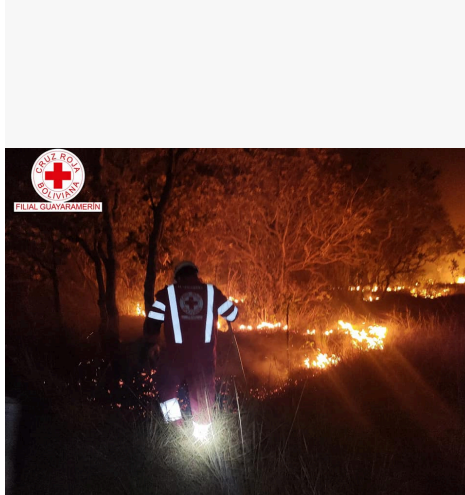
First aid for response personnel. Source: BRC, Santa Cruz Branch.



First aid for the affected community. Source: BRC, Santa Cruz Branch.



First aid for affected animals. Source: BRC, Santa Cruz Branch.



Volunteers extinguishing fires. Source: BRC, Guayaramerin Branch.



Provision of medical assistance to people affected by smoke. Source: BRC, Santa Cruz Branch.

Scope and Scale

The forest fire emergency in Bolivia has reached alarming levels, with more than 3.8 million hectares affected so far, surpassing the records of 2021 and dangerously approaching the devastating events of 2019 and 2020. These last years, particularly in 2019, were characterized as the most intense in the last decade, with more than 5.7 million hectares consumed by the flames, mainly in the departments of Beni and Santa Cruz, according to data from the Ministry of Environment and Water (MMAyA) and the Hot Spot Monitoring System (SIMB).

The recurrence and intensity of forest fires in recent years are evidence of a worrisome trend. Historically, the fire season could extend until October. Unlike the fires of 2019, a significant characteristic of this year's fires is the increasing impact on both families and forest areas, which are the source of income of indigenous communities.

As with the fires of 2019 and 2021, the departments of El Beni and Santa Cruz are those that concentrate the highest percentage of burned areas. According to information collected by the Departmental Emergency Operations Committee (COED) of Santa Cruz, there are reports of 14 municipalities, 78 communities, at least 7 thousand crops and 22 houses burned as of September 11. Among the immediate needs in the coming weeks reported by the COED are food, water and oral rehydration supplies, deployment of medical brigades, personal protection equipment and machinery.

In Beni, as in Santa Cruz, the damage assessment and needs analyses are being finalized and preliminary information is available on the impact on 13 municipalities, 139 communities and at least 1,705 families affected by the fires. In addition to the environmental impacts, the forest fires have had a significant impact on local and indigenous communities such as Tumichucua, Bella Flor, Cachuela, Tacana Cavineño Chácobo in the department of Beni and Asunción de Guarayos, San Antonio de Lomerío, Palestina and Santa Mónica in the department of Santa Cruz, causing economic losses, displacing populations and affecting the health of people exposed to smoke and polluting particles.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Forest Information and Monitoring System of Bolivia	https://simb.siarh.gob.bo/simb/map_heat_source?
2. Satellite map of the disaster: Bolivia is the country most affected by fire pollution	https://www.infobae.com/americas/america-latina/2024/09/10/mapa-satelital-del-desastre-bolivia-es-el-pais-mas-afectado-por-la-contaminacion-de-los-incendios/
3. Wildfires in Bolivia: A comparison of the years 2019, 2020, and 2021	https://piensaverdebolivia.org/2021/12/06/incendios-forestales-en-bolivia/
4. Supreme Decree No. 5219	http://gacetaoficialdebolivia.gob.bo/normas/buscar/5219
5. Bolivia declares national emergency and health alert due to wildfires; requests international assistance.	https://apnews.com/world-news/general-news-a4e29994c7e454f0e9f0ebae112edea0#

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:

-

Lessons learned:

Drawing on the experience gained from previous response operations, lessons learned have been integrated into the development of the current DREF request. This integration aims to mitigate similar issues encountered during implementation, including:

- Improved coordination with social organizations regarding market and feasibility studies for implementing multi-purpose cash transfer programs. By working closely with local organizations, we can ensure that these programs are tailored to the specific needs of the affected communities, ensure attendance is not duplicated and intervention strategies are implemented effectively.
- Increased community awareness of the auxiliary role of the Red Cross so as not to confuse humanitarian actions with political campaigns. By clearly communicating the Red Cross's neutral and impartial mandate, we can build trust with affected communities and ensure that our assistance is not politicized.
- Strengthened community commitment through the socialization of the operation's lines of work and the opening of feedback channels. By involving communities in the planning and implementation of our response, we can ensure that their needs are met and that they feel empowered to participate in the recovery process.
- Enhanced coordination with other humanitarian agencies to avoid duplication of efforts. By working collaboratively with other organizations, we can optimize the use of resources and ensure that assistance is delivered efficiently and effectively.
- Careful analysis of the type of intervention, within the framework of "do not harm." Given the challenges faced in delivering financial assistance through banks in previous interventions, we will need to carefully assess the feasibility of this approach in the current context.

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

26-07-2024

Health	<p>In the Santa Cruz Branch, a team of volunteers deployed to the Municipality of Roboré to provide first aid and basic health care to firefighters and community members from 23 August to 31 August. At least 150 people were reached with services such as wound and burn healing, rehydration, vital signs control, bandaging, among others.</p> <p>On 7 September, the Guayaramerín Branch, through its volunteers, distributed face masks to the population of the municipality and, in collaboration with the Disaster Response Unit at the municipality, conducted a needs assessment in 2 communities.</p> <p>In Riberalta the BRC branch and its volunteers are providing first aid to firefighters from August 30 to September 13.</p> <p>Finally, the Bolivian Red Cross has launched a nationwide campaign to collect medical supplies, drinking water, and cash donations. These resources will be used to support first response teams and communities affected by the fires. The Red Cross is also actively participating in the regional emergency committees (Santa Cruz and Beni) and coordinating its efforts at the national level with the Humanitarian Country Team.</p>
Coordination	<p>At the national level, the authorities of the Bolivian Red Cross participate in the Humanitarian Country Team, comprised of agencies of the United Nations System, NGOs, and civil society organizations. A meeting was held with the Vice-Ministry of Civil Defense to establish strategies to support the government's current actions in conjunction with the HCT.</p> <p>The Guayaramerín Branch (Department of Beni) leads the information analysis team in the Municipal Committee for Risk Reduction and Disaster Management (COMURADE). Coordination meetings with the Humanitarian Country Team are also held on a regular</p>



basis at the national level.

The Santa Cruz branch is a member of the Emergency Operations Committee (COE), through which it is supporting the evaluation and channeling of humanitarian aid.

Finally, through coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team, an on-site evaluation was conducted during the first week of September in the department of Santa Cruz.

The BRC, through its municipal branches in Roboré and San Ignacio, contributed with information and local contact links for the deployment of the HCT in these areas, where the fires were still active.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

<p>Secretariat</p>	<p>The IFRC's Country Delegation (CCD) for the Andean Countries, based in Lima, covers Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. The CCD maintains a close relationship and coordinates closely with the Bolivian Red Cross. Additionally, permanent communication is maintained with the different levels within the IFRC. The IFRC Secretariat will provide regular support to the BRC for this emergency as needed, especially in areas such as reporting, finance control, logistics and shelter.</p> <p>With two DREF operations, one in response to droughts and the other in response to flooding in the north of the country, the IFRC contributes to mitigating the effects of climate change in the face of adverse events in Bolivia.</p>
<p>Participating National Societies</p>	<p>The Swiss Red Cross supports the National Society by strengthening its response structure through the development of policies in disaster risk management (DRM), health, and contributing to the analysis of opportunities with support in the development of the Improvement Plan.</p>

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The ICRC supports the National Society in the strategies of strengthening the capacity of the National Society, safer access, and restoring family links. While the Bolivian Red Cross is not currently working with the ICRC in emergency response, it is supporting micro-projects that enhance response to potential social unrest.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

<p>Government has requested international assistance</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>National authorities</p>	<p>The response of the national and departmental governments has focused on fighting the fires, with the deployment of 8 aircraft at the national level that conducted 1,176 water discharges, and approximately 3,195 forest firefighters, who have carried out 69 land operations and 55 aerial operations. Various interministerial and multilevel coordination mechanisms have been activated, and international support has been requested bilaterally, primarily in terms of air tankers. To date, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Peru, and Venezuela have provided direct support.</p> <p>As of 1 September, the Vice-Ministry of Civil Defense had provided humanitarian assistance to more than 5,180 people, distributing 42 tons of aid. The COED of Santa Cruz reported the delivery of 39.2 tons of water and food.</p> <p>The Departmental Operation Committee (COED) of Santa Cruz, through direct</p>



communication, requested support from the Santa Cruz Branch to be able to send volunteers to provide medical assistance and first aid.

In response to the emergency, the Ministry of Health has provided 6,326 medical attentions to more than 5,000 people in the affected communities and has reinforced its response capacity with additional brigades and first aid kits. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has complemented these efforts by providing communication material, training, and medical equipment.

Through a meeting with the Vice-Ministry of Civil Defense and the HCT, a coordination meeting was held, where VIDECI called on the humanitarian agencies and institutions that make up the HCT to carry out joint actions in the field.

UN or other actors

The Humanitarian Country Team has begun an assessment of damages and needs in the affected areas, although the results are still inconclusive. Organizations such as UNICEF and Save the Children have pre-positioned supplies for water purification and hygiene. The World Food Program (WFP) has made available its cash transfer program as a possible short-term solution to meet the basic needs of families.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Humanitarian Country Team, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), is composed of United Nations agencies such as UNICEF, WFP, and UNFPA, as well as non-governmental organizations such as World Vision, Save the Children-CAHB, among others. This team promotes coordination and information sharing among humanitarian organizations to support the development of a coordinated emergency response. The Bolivian Red Cross co-leads this coordination space alongside the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

At the local level, the Bolivian Red Cross participates in the Municipal Committee for Risk Reduction and Disaster Management (COMURADE), whose objective is to provide analytical advice and recommendations on risk reduction and disaster response in coordination with the main municipal authorities of Guayaramerín (Beni). Additionally, in Santa Cruz, the Bolivian Red Cross's departmental branch actively participates in the Departmental Emergency Operations Center, where fundraising initiatives are developed to alleviate the costs of this emergency.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

The emergency forced the evacuation of more than 500 people, who were temporarily housed in public spaces and with host families, however, only 26 out of 64 municipalities declared in emergency have shared official reports to the National Government so it is expected a higher figure of IDPs. Although most of them have already been able to return to their homes, the precariousness of the shelters and the limited response capacity of the authorities have forced some evacuees to return to risk areas, exposing them to new threats.

The response capacity of local authorities has been overwhelmed, especially in areas of difficult access where limited telephone coverage makes it difficult to coordinate rescue and assistance efforts. This situation has led to the displacement of entire communities, which, in the absence of updated data and the lack of a coordinated response at the municipal level, are forced to organize themselves autonomously to meet their basic needs.

In the municipality of Concepción, for example, 150 inhabitants of the Palestina community were evacuated to the Community Center. To date, at least half of them continue to face difficulties in accessing food, hygiene and medical care.

The magnitude of the fires and the complexity of the geography have led to local governments exceeding their control capacities, posing a constant threat to life, property, and ecosystems in the region, especially affecting indigenous communities.

The emergency has left at least 240 people unable to return to their homes due to severe damage to their houses. To determine reconstruction and/or rehabilitation needs it is essential to carry out additional field assessments, especially in areas of difficult access. Likewise, the Risk Management Units require greater support to carry out these assessments efficiently.

Municipal governments have provided support in the evacuation of affected families, providing humanitarian supplies to displaced families to the extent of their current capacities. Organizations such as IOM, World Vision, Practical Action, and Red Helmets are assessing



the housing needs of displaced communities and providing technical assistance to municipalities to manage the assistance and protection of these populations. In addition, they maintain close coordination with the Departmental Emergency Committee (COED) Santa Cruz.

Emergency response faces several challenges. The lack of efficient early warning systems and adequate communication channels hinders the timely evacuation of communities in the face of imminent risks. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to provide long-term support to families whose homes have been damaged or destroyed, especially in terms of materials for reconstruction. Limited accessibility to affected areas, due to long distances and lack of telephone coverage, complicates timely response in remote communities.



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The agricultural sector, especially subsistence agriculture, has suffered significant losses due to droughts and fires. Seeds, fertilizers, and other agricultural inputs are needed to recover corn, cassava, beans, plantains, and other crops. The livestock sector, primarily cattle and pigs, requires food, water, and medicines to recover. In Chiquitania, 20% of the livestock is in a critical situation due to a lack of water and fodder.

The families and communities of indigenous peoples living in the affected sectors rely on the forest as a vital source of subsistence, accessing food through hunting and gathering, wood for firewood and construction, as well as honey, medicines, fish, and other elements for the production of handicrafts. In some cases, the loss of grasslands in open forests has also resulted in a decrease in the food available for the communities' livestock. To date, at least 9 indigenous communities have been identified in the affected areas.

As of 1 September, the Vice-Ministry of Civil Defense had provided humanitarian assistance to more than 5,180 people, distributing 42 tons of aid. The COED of Santa Cruz reported the delivery of 39.2 tons of water and food. The World Food Program (WFP), as leader of the United Nations Emergency Team, has made available its capacity to support the response, offering cash transfers to affected families to cover their basic needs.

Forest fires have caused a collapse of local agrifood systems, especially in areas that are difficult to access. This has severely affected subsistence crops, putting the food security of communities at risk. Long-term interventions are required to recover the economic activities of indigenous communities, who depend directly on the forest for their livelihoods through agriculture, hunting, and gathering.



Health

There is an urgent need to increase the supply of medicines to treat respiratory, eye, and other conditions associated with smoke exposure. It is also essential to expand primary health care services, especially in affected communities, with an emphasis on respiratory and eye diseases and dehydration. Additionally, it is crucial to conduct nutritional assessments in vulnerable groups and to provide first aid to first responders. Mental health also requires attention, especially for firefighters, volunteers, children, adolescents, and their families, who face increased stress due to family separation.

In response to the emergency, the Ministry of Health has provided 6,326 medical attentions to more than 5,000 people in the affected communities and has reinforced its response capacity with additional brigades and first aid kits. The Bolivian Red Cross has deployed a support team in Roboré to provide first aid care to the population and first responders. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has complemented these efforts by providing communication material, training, and medical equipment.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Fires have led to the contamination of water sources, destroyed infrastructure, and increased the risk of waterborne diseases.

The affected water infrastructure must be rehabilitated, including repairing catchment systems contaminated by sediment, restoring distribution networks damaged by fires, and rehabilitating wells. It is also necessary to provide pumping equipment and hygiene supplies to guarantee water quality and prevent waterborne diseases.

The municipalities affected by the fires report significant difficulties in the rehabilitation of pumping systems, which has limited water supply. Due to the prioritization of firefighting efforts, detailed water infrastructure assessments and water quality analyses are still in their early stages.





Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The security of the communities has been compromised. Security incidents have been reported in displaced communities, and community protection routes have not functioned optimally. Additionally, minors have been exposed to risky situations by participating in firefighting without adequate protection.

Communication has also been a major challenge. The lack of telephone signal in rural areas has made contact between family members difficult and has generated uncertainty and concern. A more efficient communication system is needed to reach the affected population.

Finally, access to basic services has been limited. Evacuation processes have been chaotic, resulting in the separation of families and delaying assistance to vulnerable groups. There is a need to improve access to basic services such as drinking water, sanitation, and medical care in the affected areas.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Red Helmets are leading actions to monitor and coordinate humanitarian assistance in the affected areas. The Departmental Health Services (SEDES) and the Ministry of Health have deployed mobile brigades to provide medical and psychological care. Civil society organizations such as Ayuda en Acción and World Vision Bolivia are promoting the prevention of violence against children and adolescents through communication campaigns. The Red Helmets have set up a psychological hotline to provide support to communities and response teams.

Despite these efforts, significant challenges remain. A more detailed assessment of the damage and needs of the population, the strengthening of social protection and communication systems in rural areas, and investment in long-term prevention to reduce the risk of future fires are necessary.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

The National Society is closely coordinating with the Integrated Information and Early Warning System for Disaster Risk Management (SINAGER-SAT) and public authorities at the Departmental Emergency Operations Center to access specific information about prioritized communities and families. Given the geographic conditions and the current focus of authorities on dealing with the flames, there may be limitations on gathering information about needs. It is essential to prioritize efforts to collect data from affected communities, especially those in remote or hard-to-reach areas. As of 16 September, only 26 out of 64 municipalities declared in emergency have shared official reports to the National Government and/or completed DANA assessments.

Some of the key challenges identified by the National Society include the lack of information regarding population groups with specific protection needs, such as pregnant women, older adults, children, and people with disabilities, as well as information on the impact of the current emergency.

During the first month of implementation, in parallel with first aid activities, the National Society will conduct a multi-sectorial rapid needs assessment to identify specific gaps in livelihoods, shelter, and other needs that still need to be identified.

[Assessment Report](#)

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this DREF allocation, the Bolivian Red Cross aims to support 2,500 people, including first responders and communities affected by the fires in the regions of Roboré, Concepción, and San Ignacio in the department of Santa Cruz, as well as Guayaramerín and Riberalta in the department of Beni, by providing first aid assistance, delivering a Cash Transfer Program, and activating the Restoring Family Links service for affected families.

Operation strategy rationale

Through this operation, the Bolivian Red Cross aims to contribute to the implementation of the Response Plan that both the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the humanitarian agencies are developing.

The departments of Santa Cruz and Beni remain the epicenters of the forest fires that began in late June. Although the department of Pando was also initially affected, control measures have mitigated the situation in that region. However, Santa Cruz and Beni still require



priority attention due to the ongoing fire outbreaks and the extensive areas impacted. Air quality in these regions continues to be a concern, negatively affecting both the health of the population and the local economy.

Satellite data from air quality index monitoring networks show that air pollution caused by forest fires in Bolivia has crossed national borders, affecting other countries in the region. Reduced visibility in the department of Santa Cruz has forced the adoption of exceptional measures, such as the evacuation of populations and the temporary closure of the Viru Viru International Airport. The persistence of dry weather conditions and the lack of rainfall have aggravated the situation, leading the population to carry out ancestral practices in search of a solution to this crisis.

In the last few days, some regions have experienced an unprecedented level of pollution. In the city of Cobija, located in the extreme north of the country and bordering Brazil, the Municipal Government reported that it "broke the historical record" of pollution by reaching a level of 587 in the Air Quality Index (AQI), in which 300 and above is considered "extremely bad" for health.

With this intervention, the Bolivian Red Cross plans to work in three specific areas, described below:

- Humanitarian assistance through the multi-purpose cash transfer program (CVA) so that families can cover their basic needs, such as purchasing supplies for home repairs, food for their household, and other necessities.
- First aid attention to first responders (firefighters, volunteers, veterinarians, and others) and affected communities.
- Activation of the Restoring Family Links program to help people who lost communication with their families.
- Provide psychological first aid and emotional support to first responders and the population impacted by forest fires.

Through this DREF operation, the Bolivian Red Cross aims to support 2,500 people by addressing their urgent needs resulting from the fires with the delivery of a multi-purpose cash transfer program, first aid, and psychosocial support to first responders and volunteer firefighters on the front lines. The intervention will last four months and be carried out by volunteers from the Santa Cruz and Beni branches, with support from the Bolivian Red Cross Headquarters and its National Units, through the National Units of Relief and Disasters, Volunteering, Health, and IT.

MULTIPURPOSE CASH (CVA)

This program seeks to provide assistance to 500 families affected by the forest fires through direct cash transfers with two objectives:

- **Livelihood recovery:** The fires have destroyed subsistence crops such as plantain, yucca and rice, severely affecting the food security of families, especially in indigenous communities. Through this program, 400 families will receive 2,500 Bolivianos (298 CHF) to purchase seeds, tools and farm animals, thus facilitating the recovery of their livelihoods. Families with pregnant women, children under five years of age, older adults, single-parent families and people with disabilities will be prioritized.
- **Home repair:** In response to the forest fires that have affected numerous Bolivian communities, a Cash Transfer Program will be implemented for 100 families to support the reconstruction or repair of homes. Following IFRC guidelines, this program seeks to empower affected families by enabling them to make autonomous decisions about purchasing materials and hiring labor to repair their homes. A detailed evaluation of individual needs will determine the amount of the transfer, initially set at 1,850 Bolivianos (220 CHF), based on experiences implemented by other organizations in similar emergencies, prioritizing the most vulnerable families. This strategy not only speeds up the recovery process, but also boosts the local economy and strengthens the resilience of the affected communities.

The IFRC's Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach will be integrated into all phases of the multi-purpose cash (MPC) intervention. This will involve tailoring delivery modalities to diverse contexts and cultures, prioritizing vulnerable populations such as indigenous communities, people with disabilities, and those living in poverty. Additionally, robust feedback mechanisms will be implemented to ensure ongoing accountability and responsiveness to beneficiary needs.

HEALTH:

To ensure the comprehensive health of those affected by the fires, the Bolivian Red Cross currently has volunteers providing assistance in the affected areas and will continue these efforts moving forward. This operation will focus on two key areas: delivering both physical and psychological first aid. On the physical side, the operation will support primary health care efforts by providing immediate first aid to those injured or impacted by the fires. Simultaneously, psychological first aid and active listening spaces will address mental health needs, helping firefighters, support personnel, and the community manage stress and emotions triggered by traumatic events. To ensure safe referral pathways, the BRC will work closely with local health services to refer individuals requiring specialized care, ensuring a holistic response to the population's physical and mental health needs.

The IFRC's Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach will be integrated into prioritized health services within this operation. This will involve identifying preferred communication channels for the community and first responders, utilizing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services. Key messages will be co-created and translated with the community, including indigenous communities, to enhance the acceptance and implementation of recommendations regarding tools and techniques for mental health care.



PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION (PGI):

Three Restoring Family Links (RFL) points will be established in the municipalities of Riberalta and Guayaramerín in the department of Beni, and in Concepción in the department of Santa Cruz, where communities have lost contact with their families due to evacuations, preventing individuals from informing their loved ones of their situation. This strategy will be supported by the National RFL Coordinator from the Bolivian Red Cross headquarters, who will provide technical guidance to ensure the proper implementation and execution of the activity at the branch level.

In alignment with the various intervention sectors, key messages regarding access to Bolivian Red Cross family link services will be disseminated across different communities. To ensure effective communication, the BRC will consider literacy levels, preferred communication channels, and indigenous languages such as Guaraní and Moxeño.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA):

The CEA strategy for the operation will emphasize effective communication and collaboration with affected communities. Key activities include producing banners with key messages, establishing a WhatsApp line for community feedback, translating messages into native languages (Guarani and Moxeño), and organizing planning and accountability meetings to ensure community voices are heard.

Survey and assessment data will be shared with affected populations through community meetings and other preferred channels. The BRC will implement recommendations derived from community feedback and integrate them into the intervention strategies.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

This operation will assist 2,500 people who lost all or part of their livelihoods, assets or homes as a result of the fires. Prioritization will be based on the families' ability to meet their basic needs and on the humanitarian access barriers established by the authorities, UN agencies, NGOs and international organizations in the affected area. The selection criteria also include two indicators that will delimit the total beneficiary population: vulnerability and impact.

A rapid field assessment will be conducted by the BRC, with technical support from the IFRC, to evaluate shelter and livelihood impacts. The Shelter Severity Classification System of the Global Shelter Cluster will be observed to assess the severity of shelter damage, while key indicators will be considered during data collection. For livelihoods, a needs assessment aligned with IFRC guidelines will be conducted to determine the level of impact. Specific needs, such as income generation, access to essential goods and services, asset base, and access to markets.

In response to the ongoing firefighting efforts and the anticipated enduring nature of the dry season until late October, the operation is designed to provide comprehensive support to first responders, including first aid and psychological first aid.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

During the prioritization of families, special attention will be paid to groups with special protection needs, such as pregnant women, single-parent families, families with children under five years of age, older adults, people with disabilities, as well as the migrant population with protection needs. The Bolivian Red Cross has links at the community level that will allow branches to properly identify the most vulnerable cases with the greatest lack of access to government assistance activities.

The operation will also prioritize first responders working directly with affected families and communities, as well as firefighters battling the flames. This aligns with the BRC's ongoing strategy to support local and national government efforts in addressing the emergency.



Total Targeted Population

Women	902	Rural	12%
Girls (under 18)	198	Urban	88%
Men	1,100	People with disabilities (estimated)	1%
Boys (under 18)	300		
Total targeted population	2,500		

Risk and Security Considerations

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

Risk	Mitigation action
Difficulty for response teams to access the affected areas because of the fires	Coordination with municipal Risk Management Units, governor's offices, and community leaders will be established to monitor the situation and identify alternative routes for accessing the affected communities
Difficulty in the survey and needs analysis process.	The Bolivian Red Cross has cellular equipment kits acquired for the evaluation processes within the framework of operation MDRBO015. These kits will be sent to the Beni and Santa Cruz branches if necessary to support the information gathering processes
High temperatures and affected responders due to smoke inhalation	Provide volunteers with personal protective equipment such as sunscreen, sleeved shirts, hats, water for hydration and buff to cover themselves

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

Considering the health emergencies declared by the Ministry of Health and Sports, comprehensive safety protocols will be developed for staff and volunteers from the participating branches. These protocols will outline essential health and safety measures to protect all personnel involved in the operation, ensuring they are equipped to manage potential risks associated with their work in the field. Additionally, all members of the Bolivian Red Cross operating in the affected areas will be covered by IFRC insurance, providing them with necessary protection and support in case of any incidents or health-related issues during their service.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

No

Planned Intervention



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 161,232

Targeted Persons: 2,500



Indicators

Title	Target
Feasibility study	1
Market study	1
Number of families assisted with cash for livelihood restoration	400
Number of families assisted with cash for home repairs	100
Number of volunteers trained in CVA	30
Percentage of households covered by post-distribution surveys	80

Priority Actions

- Conducting a feasibility study and market analysis for the implementation of the Cash Transfer Program.
- Providing training for volunteers in Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA).
- Organizing workshops with families to explain the program's objectives.
- Distributing Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) to eligible families.
- Conducting surveys with assisted families following the distribution to understand how they utilized the funds, gather feedback, and identify better ways to assist them.



Budget: CHF 1,595

Targeted Persons: 350

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of people receiving basic first aid assistance	350
Number of people reached through psychosocial support	150

Priority Actions

- Providing First Aid Assistance to first responders and the affected community.
- Implementing psychosocial support activities for both the affected population and first responders.



Budget: CHF 3,005

Targeted Persons: 100

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of people accessing the RFL program	100



Number of RFL points activated	3
--------------------------------	---

Priority Actions

- Implementing the Restoring Family Links (RFL) program in the communities, prioritizing access for minors and individuals in vulnerable situations.
- Creating and adapting safe spaces for emotional support and expression for both the community and first responders.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 1,461
Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of banners produced with key messages	5
WhatsApp line implemented	1

Priority Actions

- Production of banners featuring key messages displayed in strategic locations.
- Establishment of a WhatsApp line as a channel for collecting feedback.
- Translation of key messages into native languages (Guarani and Moxeño).
- Organization of planning, coordination, and accountability meetings with affected communities.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 59,320
Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target
Number of monitoring visits and/or technical support visits performed	5
Surge deployments	2

Priority Actions

- Conducting follow-up visits by the CCD for Andean Countries to the National Society to support information collection for communications, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and the systematization of lessons learned from the operation.
- Deploying an Operations Manager and a Finance and Administration Officer for three months to assist the Bolivian Red Cross in implementing this operation.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 23,967



Indicators

Title	Target
Lessons learned workshop	1
Number of monitoring visits carried out	6
Number of volunteers receiving basic personal protective equipment for the response	30
Number of personnel recruited to support the operation	2

Priority Actions

- Conducting follow-up visits by the National Society to support priority branches during the operation.
- Training volunteers for the implementation of the program within the community.
- Providing personal supplies to volunteers to mitigate the risk of exposure in the field.
- Offering follow-up visits and technical support from the Bolivian Red Cross headquarters and branches to enhance the emergency response efforts of the Santa Cruz and Beni branches.
- Facilitating a lessons learned workshop to improve future response efforts.

About Support Services

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

The Bolivian Red Cross has limited staff available to support the intervention. The following professionals will be hired as National Society staff and will be fully dedicated to the operation:

- 2 Local Coordinators (100% for 4 months): One coordinator will be assigned to Santa Cruz, and the other to Beni. Their responsibilities will include developing operational actions, coordinating with local authorities, establishing synergies with other humanitarian organizations, conducting awareness processes with affected communities, managing volunteers, coordinating activities for the implementation of the Cash Transfer Program, facilitating volunteer training processes, and gathering information for diagnostic and complementary processes within the framework of the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach.
- 1 Financial Assistant (60% for 4 months): This individual will be responsible for developing a purchasing and contracting plan and preparing periodic financial reports in collaboration with the Finance and Administration Surge.

In addition, 30 volunteers will be deployed to the prioritized areas. These volunteers will be supported by the Departmental branches to assist vulnerable populations. They will be protected by IFRC insurance, and if necessary due to the transition between the years 2024 and 2025, the National Society will contract additional insurance to ensure that volunteers are always protected.

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

Two surge personnel will be deployed to support the operation:

- An Operations Manager will be assigned for three months to enhance the operation by updating territorial security plans, preparing work plans, and delineating roles and responsibilities among the technical teams and volunteers from the National Society involved in the emergency response.
- A Finance and Administration Officer will be seconded for three months to oversee all procurement processes within the project, ensuring that procedures are both effective and efficient.



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

The National Society will carry out all procurement processes in accordance with IFRC procedures, except for the money transfer program, which will be implemented through the cash pickup modality through the application of agreements with RedRose and Money Gram, providers of information and financial services, respectively.

How will this operation be monitored?

The operation will be continuously monitored by the Bolivian Red Cross headquarters through the Disaster Risk Management Unit to ensure effective implementation. All staff and volunteers involved will receive training in the National Society's emergency response procedures, which align with IFRC guidelines. The Disaster Risk Management Unit will coordinate periodic visits to the intervention areas to supervise activities and provide technical support to the teams.

Additionally, the Cluster Delegation for the Andean Countries will assist the National Society at the administrative level, facilitating the transfer of funds and financial support. They will also provide both in-person and remote assistance during the initial needs assessment, coordination, progress monitoring, and reporting phases of the operation.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The National Society has designated personnel in the Information and Communication Technologies department. With their support, audiovisual materials detailing the emergency situation, and the response actions of the National Society will be produced and disseminated. These materials will be shared on the Bolivian Red Cross website and social media platforms to enhance public awareness of the National Society's auxiliary role.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRBO017 - Bolivian Red Cross
Bolivia: Wildfires

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	167,293
Shelter and Basic Household Items	0
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	161,232
Health	1,595
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	3,005
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	1,461
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	83,287
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	59,320
National Society Strengthening	23,967
TOTAL BUDGET	250,580

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Internal

23/09/2024

#V2022.01

[Click here to download the budget file](#)



Contact Information

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

National Society contact: Jorge Jhonatan Quino Soliz, Executive Director, dirección.e@cruzrojaboliviana.org.bo

IFRC Appeal Manager: Ruben Romero, Head of Country Cluster Delegation, ruben.romero@ifrc.org

IFRC Project Manager: Julian Perez, Coordinator, Programme and Operations, julian.perez@ifrc.org

IFRC focal point for the emergency: Julian Perez, Coordinator, Programme and Operations, julian.perez@ifrc.org

Media Contact: Susana Arroyo, Regional Communications Manager, susana.arroyo@ifrc.org

[Click here for the reference](#)

