



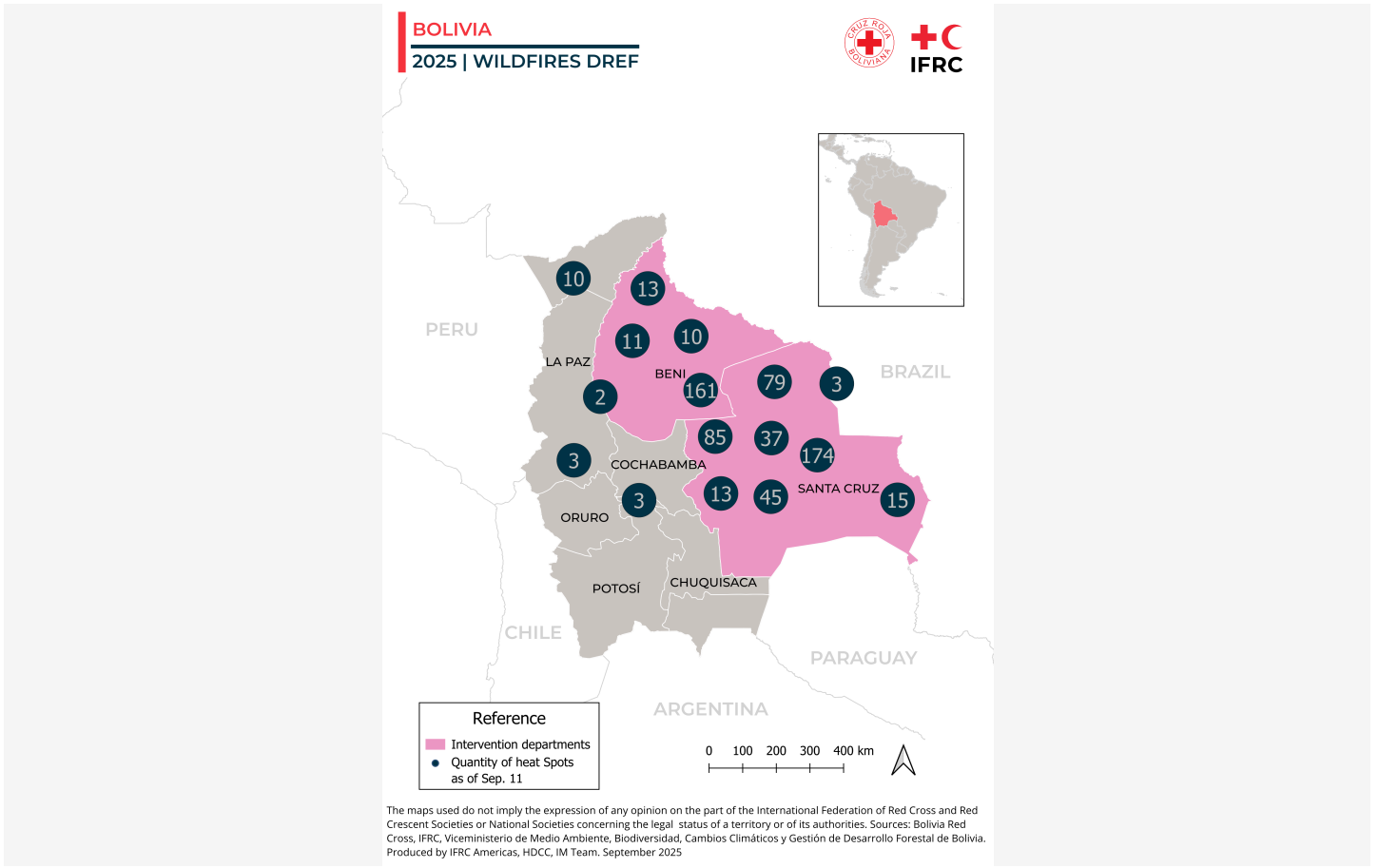
Household water filter distribution. Guayaramerín, March 2026. Source: BRC.

Appeal: MDRBO019	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 259,300	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Fire
Glide Number: FL-2025-000235-BOL	People Affected: 14,000 people	People Targeted: 2,150 people	People Assisted: 2,040 people
Event Onset: Sudden	Operation Start Date: 02-09-2025	Operational End Date: 31-03-2026	Total Operating Timeframe: 6 months

Targeted Regions: **Beni, Santa Cruz**

The major donors of the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, as well as DG ECHO, Mondelez International Foundation and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Bolivian Red Cross, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

Description of the Event



Active fire hotspots in Bolivia, August 2025. Source: SIMB, MMAyA.

Date of event

25-08-2025

What happened, where and when?

Beginning in June 2025, Bolivia experienced a combination of wildfires and prolonged drought conditions that affected several departments across the country. The emergency evolved over several months as prolonged dry conditions, high temperatures, strong winds and the accumulation of dry vegetation created conditions that increase the risk of ignition and rapid spread of fires across large areas of the country.

The combined effects of wildfires and drought generated significant humanitarian, environmental and economic impacts. By late September 2025, more than 1.76 million hectares had been affected by wildfires nationwide, including protected forest areas, while prolonged water shortages increasingly affected rural and Indigenous communities dependent on agriculture and livestock production. The deterioration of water sources, loss of crops and pasturelands, and growing pressure on livelihoods highlighted the scale and complexity of the crisis.

As conditions worsened, the Government of Bolivia declared a national state of emergency for forest fires on 20 August 2025, in accordance with the provisions of Bolivia's Risk Management Law No. 602, which recognizes both wildfires and droughts as hazards with a high impact across the country. In Santa Cruz, the department most affected by the emergency, authorities progressively activated response measures as the combined effects of drought, strong winds and wildfires intensified. A departmental state of emergency was declared on 10 September, followed by the activation of municipal emergency coordination mechanisms and the issuance of a red alert by the Vice Ministry of Civil Defence (VIDECI) for 18 municipalities facing a high risk of wildfire spread due to extreme weather conditions.



In response to the emergency, the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), launched a Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) operation in September 2025 focused on addressing the humanitarian impacts of the wildfire emergency.

As implementation progressed, assessments and community consultations showed that, while wildfire activity was decreasing, prolonged drought conditions were becoming the main concern in affected communities. Reduced water availability, impacts on agriculture and livestock, and increasing health and livelihood risks were consistently reported in the province of Beni, particularly in the municipality of Guayaramerín, where these challenges became the primary concerns among affected households.

Based on these findings, the operation was revised in February 2026 to address the evolving humanitarian situation and respond to the growing impacts of the drought in Guayaramerín, Beni. This adjustment enabled the operation to better align with the priority needs identified by communities and local authorities, with an increased focus on health, access to safe water and the protection of livelihoods.



Health promotion activities. Santa Cruz, 2026. Source: BRC



Water filter distribution. Guayaramerín, March 2026. Source: BRC



Training on water purification filters. Santa Cruz, March 2026. Source: BRC



Hygiene kit distribution. Santa Cruz, January 2026. Source: BRC

Scope and Scale

The 2025 wildfire season was among the most severe recorded in Bolivia in recent years. According to the Global Wildfire Information System (GWIS), by late September 2025 the country had registered 3,713 fire events and nearly 1.76 million hectares affected, including protected forest areas that represented approximately 30 per cent of the total area burned. The emergency particularly affected the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni, where the combined effects of wildfires and prolonged drought generated significant environmental, economic and humanitarian consequences.

In Santa Cruz, the impacts extended across several municipalities and protected areas, including Noel Kempff Mercado National Park. By

the end of September, authorities reported 22 active wildfires and more than 127,000 hectares affected. The scale of the emergency required the mobilisation of an estimated 500 to 600 firefighters, most of them community volunteers, who played a critical role in containment efforts under challenging operational conditions.

Among the areas prioritised by the operation were the municipalities of Concepción and San Ignacio de Velasco. In San Ignacio de Velasco, local assessments identified impacts in 33 communities, affecting 974 families, equivalent to approximately 4,870 people. In both municipalities, prolonged drought conditions increasingly affected households dependent on small-scale agriculture and livestock production, reducing water availability and affecting productive activities that constitute the main source of income and food for many families.

In the municipality of Guayaramerín, Beni, the crisis evolved progressively from wildfire-related impacts to a prolonged drought emergency. The municipality comprises 39 farming communities and one Indigenous community distributed across three districts. According to local monitoring systems and assessments conducted by the BRC, 19 communities were affected by wildfires, while nearly all experienced severe drought conditions. Water shortages became increasingly critical for household consumption, agriculture and livestock production, while contamination of water sources by ash and sediments further reduced access to safe water.

Throughout the emergency, communities reported significant losses in crops and pasturelands, increased incidence of diseases associated with poor water quality and vector proliferation, and growing concerns regarding food security. The situation was further compounded by fuel shortages and mobility constraints that limited access to markets, health services and essential supplies, particularly in remote communities located several hours from urban centres.

Rural farming households were among the most affected population groups due to their direct dependence on agriculture and livestock production. As productive losses accumulated and water sources continued to deteriorate, many families faced increasing difficulties in maintaining their livelihoods and food security. These challenges were particularly pronounced in remote rural and Indigenous communities with limited access to services and fewer opportunities to cope with the prolonged effects of the drought.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. ACAPS Bolivia: Impact of the 2025 Wildfires, September 23, 2025	https://www.acaps.org/fileadmin/Data_Product/Main_media/20250923 ACAPS Bolivia - Impact of wildfires .pdf
2. Wildfires Advance in Bolivia: Alert Activated in 66 Municipalities (MONGABAY)	https://es.mongabay.com/2025/08/incendios-forestales-bolivia-alerta-municipios
3. Wildfires: International Aid Mobilized (EL POTOSÍ)	https://elpotosi.net/nacional/20250826_incendios-gestionan-ayuda-internacional.html
4. Wildfire Risk Monitoring and Early Warning System (SATRIFO)	https://incendios.fan-bo.org/Satrifo/plataforma
5. Ministry of Environment and Water – Fire Hotspot Monitoring	https://simb.planificacion.gob.bo/
6. Bolivian Government Declares National Emergency Due to Wildfires (SWISSINFO.CH)	https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/el-gobierno-de-bolivia-declara-%22emergencia-nacional%22-por-tres-incendios-forestales/89867841
7. Establishment of the COEM in Concepción, Santa Cruz	https://eldeber.com.bo/santa-cruz/incendios-concepcion-conforma-el-coem-y-despliega-bomberos-en-la-reserva-rio-blanco-y-negro_529899/
8. Red alert remains in effect in Santa Cruz, September 27	https://www.reduno.com.bo/noticias/santa-cruz-registra-22-incendios-activos-y-el-parque-noel-kempff-arde-desde-hace-dos-meses-2025927192017



National Society Actions

<p>Have the National Society conducted any intervention additionally to those part of this DREF Operation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please provide a brief description of those additional activities</p>	<p>Prior to the implementation of the DREF operation, the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) branch in Guayaramerín played a key role in the local response to the wildfire emergency, acting as the primary responder in affected communities. Through its volunteers, the branch supported wildfire suppression efforts in several communities within the municipality and provided immediate humanitarian assistance to affected families.</p> <p>Additional actions included the collection and distribution of family food baskets and bottled water mobilized through local donations and contributions from markets and community actors. These efforts helped address urgent needs while assessments were being conducted and before DREF-supported activities were launched.</p>

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

<p>Secretariat</p>	<p>The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), through its Country Cluster Delegation for the Andean Countries based in Lima, maintained close coordination with the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) throughout the operation. Regular communication was sustained between the National Society, the Country Cluster Delegation and relevant technical units within the IFRC to ensure timely support and follow-up during implementation.</p> <p>The IFRC Secretariat provided technical support in accordance with the needs identified by the National Society, particularly in the areas of Operations Management and Coordination, Finance and Logistics, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER), Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), and Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI). This support contributed to strengthening operational management, monitoring, reporting processes and the overall quality of the response delivered to affected communities.</p> <p>To further reinforce the response, the IFRC deployed an Operations Manager was deployed in September 2025 for one month through the IFRC Rapid Response mechanism. The deployment supported coordination, planning, monitoring and the initial implementation of activities, contributing to the effective management of the operation and alignment with IFRC procedures and standards.</p>
<p>Participating National Societies</p>	<p>The Swiss Red Cross supported the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) through initiatives aimed at strengthening its institutional and operational response capacities. This support included the development of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and health policies, as well as contributions to opportunity analysis processes and the formulation of the National Society's institutional and operational strengthening plan.</p> <p>In addition, the Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA) methodology was implemented, and community contingency plans were developed in the Guayaramerín and Concepción branches. These actions were carried out prior to and independently from the DREF operation, but contributed to strengthening local</p>



preparedness, risk analysis capacities and community-level response planning in areas later affected by the emergency.

The Norwegian Red Cross also provided support to the Bolivian Red Cross through initiatives focused on strengthening and developing the National Society's financial management system. This support was implemented independently and outside the scope of the DREF operation, contributing to the ongoing strengthening of institutional capacities.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) continued to work closely with the Bolivian Red Cross outside the scope of the DREF Operation, supporting the strengthening of the National Society's institutional and operational capacities. In particular, the ICRC provided support in the areas of Safer Access and Restoring Family Links (RFL), contributing to the development of capacities and tools relevant to the BRC's humanitarian response.

In addition, the ICRC supported community-based Disaster Risk Management (DRM) initiatives implemented by the BRC in the branches of Chuquisaca, Oruro, La Paz and Cochabamba. These initiatives included community projects aimed at reducing local vulnerabilities, including actions in the outskirts of Quillacollo to improve access to safe water through the use of water purification systems.

The ICRC also collaborated with the BRC in strengthening its operational security framework. During the reporting period, the National Society updated its Operational Security Manual through a participatory process involving branches across the country. The ICRC provided technical input and review of the document, in line with the progress of the Strategic Response Plan. With additional support from the Swiss Red Cross, the validation of the Operational Security Manual was planned as part of the broader institutional strengthening process. These initiatives were implemented independently and outside the framework of the DREF operation.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	<p>National authorities played an important role in monitoring and responding to the emergency, particularly in the department of Santa Cruz. Through the Departmental Emergency Operations Centre (COED), the departmental government coordinated the delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected municipalities, including Roboré, San Ignacio de Velasco, San Matías, San Rafael and Guarayos. Support included the provision of water, food supplies, basic relief items, forestry tools and protective equipment for community volunteer firefighters involved in wildfire suppression efforts.</p> <p>Authorities also implemented monitoring and coordination measures to strengthen response activities. In Concepción, a monitoring room was established to track active hotspots and wildfire developments, while in Roboré an Incident Command System (ICS) was activated through coordination between departmental firefighters and partner institutions. Additional actions included the use of drones for damage assessment and situation monitoring, as well as support for the rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife affected by the fires through specialised environmental response teams.</p> <p>In contrast, institutional response capacities in Guayaramerín, Beni, were more limited.</p>



	<p>The municipality did not have a local presence of the Vice Ministry of Civil Defence (VIDECI), whose nearest office is located in Riberalta. Although the Municipal Risk Management Unit received reports from affected communities, resource constraints limited its ability to conduct field assessments, activate early warning mechanisms or issue formal emergency declarations, highlighting the operational challenges faced by local authorities during the emergency.</p>
<p>UN or other actors</p>	<p>No United Nations agencies were permanently present in the municipalities of Concepción, San Ignacio de Velasco or Guayaramerín during the emergency. However, several national and international non-governmental organisations, foundations and civil society actors were active in the affected areas, particularly in activities related to environmental conservation, community resilience, rural development and support to Indigenous and farming communities.</p> <p>In Santa Cruz, organisations such as the Centre for Research and Promotion of the Peasantry (CIPCA), Fundación para la Conservación del Bosque Seco Chiquitano (FCBC), Helvetas, The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Fundación Proinpa, Fundación Natura, Hidrotierra, APCOB and ChildFund Bolivia, among others, maintained a presence in the region and contributed to ongoing community development and environmental initiatives.</p> <p>In the department of Beni, organisations including Cáritas Beni, CIPCA, APCOB and World Vision maintained activities in different locations. However, according to information collected during assessments, no organisation was providing a dedicated response to wildfire- or drought-related impacts in Guayaramerín during the period covered by the operation, making the Bolivian Red Cross one of the few actors directly supporting affected communities in the area.</p>

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

At the national level, coordination was carried out through the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The platform brought together United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as non-governmental organisations such as World Vision and Save the Children. The HCT facilitated information sharing and coordination among humanitarian actors to support the development of a more coherent and coordinated emergency response. Within this mechanism, the Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) held a co-leadership role alongside the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

At the departmental level, BRC actively participated in the Departmental Emergency Operations Centre (COED) in Santa Cruz, led by the departmental government. Through this mechanism, response actors exchanged information, coordinated response actions and supported initiatives aimed at mobilising resources to help address the costs associated with the emergency response.

At the local level in Guayaramerín, coordination relied primarily on direct engagement with municipal authorities and community representative structures. The representation of the departmental government in the municipality rested with the municipal government, which assumed a central role in local coordination efforts. The BRC maintained close coordination with the Municipal Risk Management Unit and local authorities to facilitate information sharing, assessments and response planning.

The National Society also coordinated directly with the Bolivian Police, which requested support from the BRC for wildfire response activities due to the absence of an operational firefighting service in the municipality. In addition, the BRC worked closely with the Peasant Federation, representing the municipality's 39 rural communities and indigenous social organisations in the southern part of the municipality, as well as with the Indigenous Communities Federation, which represented four Indigenous communities. These coordination arrangements facilitated access to affected communities, needs assessments and the identification of priority humanitarian needs throughout the operation.

A key coordination challenge identified during the operation was the limited activation of formal emergency coordination mechanisms at the municipal level in Guayaramerín. No municipal emergency declarations or official alerts were issued during the emergency, and coordination therefore depended largely on bilateral engagement between the BRC, local authorities and community organisations. Despite these limitations, the established relationships with local stakeholders enabled the operation to reach affected communities and implement response activities in a timely manner.



Needs (Gaps) Identified



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The combined effects of wildfires and prolonged drought had a significant impact on the livelihoods and basic needs of affected communities, particularly in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni. Rural households depended largely on small-scale agriculture, livestock production and, in some areas, natural resources for their subsistence and income generation. As drought conditions persisted and wildfire impacts accumulated, many families experienced a progressive deterioration in their productive capacities and economic resilience.

Communities reported losses in crops, pasturelands and livestock, reducing both household food availability and income sources. In the Bolivian Amazon and other rural areas, environmental degradation and damage to natural resources further affected the livelihoods of Indigenous and farming communities that rely on local ecosystems for food, water and economic activities. Areas such as Noel Kempff Mercado National Park also experienced significant environmental impacts, affecting biodiversity and ecosystem services that support surrounding communities.

Assessments conducted during the operation identified a wide range of recovery needs among affected households. While some families prioritised the rehabilitation of small wooden structures damaged by the fires, others required support to restore water sources for livestock and agricultural activities, including the use of heavy machinery to improve watering points and wells. Many households also reported difficulties in covering basic needs, including the purchase of food, medicines and agricultural inputs, as available income was insufficient to replace lost assets and production.

The situation was particularly challenging in remote communities, where limited access to markets, services and transportation, compounded by fuel shortages, reduced opportunities for recovery. As productive losses accumulated and water availability continued to decline, many families faced increasing difficulties in maintaining their livelihoods, meeting their basic needs and preserving their food security.

These impacts were especially severe among rural farming households, whose dependence on agriculture and livestock left them highly exposed to the effects of drought and wildfires. The diversity of losses and recovery priorities highlighted the importance of flexible assistance mechanisms that enabled families to address their most urgent needs according to their specific circumstances.



Health

The combined effects of wildfires and prolonged drought generated significant health risks for affected communities, particularly in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni. Limited access to safe water, extreme temperatures, poor air quality and the deterioration of livelihoods increased the exposure of communities to a range of health conditions, with children, older persons, pregnant women and people with pre-existing health conditions among the most vulnerable groups.

Communities assessed during the operation reported an increase in illnesses associated with water scarcity and high temperatures, including coughs, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, stomach pain and headaches linked to dehydration and the consumption of contaminated water. The impacts of the wildfires also led to recurrent respiratory and skin-related conditions, including persistent coughs, eye irritation, skin rashes, burns and respiratory infections associated with prolonged exposure to smoke and poor air quality.

The prolonged drought further increased health risks by reducing access to safe drinking water and contributing to the contamination of water sources. As a result, communities reported a rise in gastrointestinal diseases, particularly diarrhoeal illnesses. At the same time, dust, smoke and deteriorating air quality aggravated respiratory conditions such as asthma and bronchitis. Changes in mosquito habitats and environmental conditions also increased the risk of malaria transmission and other vector-borne diseases, including dengue and chikungunya.

The effects of the drought extended beyond immediate health concerns. Reduced agricultural production and losses in household food sources increased the risk of malnutrition, particularly among vulnerable population groups. Extreme temperatures also contributed to cases of heat stress and other heat-related illnesses. In addition, the economic and social pressures associated with the prolonged emergency negatively affected psychosocial well-being, with communities reporting increased levels of stress, anxiety and emotional distress.



Access to health services represented an additional challenge in several of the affected communities. Assessments found that many communities lacked nearby health centres or health posts, limiting timely access to medical care and increasing reliance on traditional medicine. At the same time, local health services faced growing pressure due to the increase in wildfire- and drought-related illnesses. During the same period, Santa Cruz was also responding to a measles outbreak, further straining health system capacities.

Key gaps identified included limited availability of medicines and supplies to address respiratory and eye conditions, restricted access to health services in remote communities, and increasing needs for first aid, health promotion and mental health and psychosocial support services for affected populations.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Access to safe water was one of the main challenges faced by communities affected by the combined impacts of wildfires and prolonged drought. In both Santa Cruz and Beni, communities relied primarily on natural water sources, including rivers, streams, wells and communal reservoirs. While some communities had food-grade storage tanks and water distribution systems, assessments found that available water was often unsuitable for human consumption due to contamination, inadequate maintenance of water infrastructure and reduced water availability during prolonged dry periods.

In Concepción and San Ignacio de Velasco, assessments conducted during the operation found that most communities had communal tanks and wells; however, when these sources dried up or became unsafe, families increasingly relied on nearby rivers for their water needs. Similar conditions were observed in Guayaramerín, where only some communities had access to communal water tanks located near population centres, while more dispersed households depended on rivers, streams and shallow wells. Communities also reported operational challenges affecting water systems, including the theft of pumps and solar panels used to extract and distribute water.

Water quality represented a significant concern across the affected areas. River water was exposed to contamination from agricultural chemicals, mining activities, inadequate solid waste management and, during the wildfire season, ash deposits. Communities reported that ash contamination affected water quality and, in some cases, caused skin irritation and other health concerns. As water availability declined, many families prioritised the use of available water for livestock and crop production, while only households with greater financial resources were able to regularly purchase bottled water, often at a considerable cost.

Assessments also identified gaps in household water treatment and hygiene practices. In several communities, water treatment consisted primarily of exposing water containers to sunlight and covering them with cloth, a practice insufficient to ensure safe drinking water. These findings highlighted the need to strengthen awareness and community capacities related to safe water handling, household water treatment and hygiene practices.

The drought also increased pressures on productive water use. Farmers reported having to transport water by motorcycle to sustain livestock and priority crops when local watering points and wells dried up, increasing both costs and daily workloads. These conditions further affected livelihoods and reinforced the need for measures to improve access to water for both household consumption and productive activities.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The wildfire and drought emergency disproportionately affected population groups with existing vulnerabilities, exacerbating pre-existing inequalities and increasing protection risks within affected communities. Rural households already facing limited access to services, information and economic opportunities encountered additional challenges as water scarcity, livelihood losses and reduced mobility affected their ability to meet basic needs and recover from the crisis.

Particular concerns were identified for older persons, people with disabilities, pregnant women, children and single-caregiver households, who faced greater barriers to accessing essential services, safe water sources and livelihood opportunities. The remoteness of many communities, combined with transportation constraints and fuel shortages, further increased the risk of exclusion from services and humanitarian assistance, especially for those with reduced mobility or limited support networks.

The emergency affected different population groups in distinct ways. Increased water scarcity and the deterioration of environmental conditions affected daily routines and access to essential resources, while children, older persons and people with disabilities faced increased challenges associated with limited access to services, extreme temperatures and deteriorating environmental conditions. At the same time, the loss of livelihoods, uncertainty regarding future income and the prolonged effects of drought contributed to increased stress and emotional strain within affected communities.



Although no significant displacement was reported in the areas covered by the operation, assessments highlighted the importance of ensuring that humanitarian assistance, information-sharing and community engagement processes remained accessible and inclusive for all population groups. The emergency reinforced the need to apply a protection, gender and inclusion lens throughout the response to reduce barriers to assistance and promote equitable access to services and support.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this DREF allocation, the Bolivian Red Cross aimed to assist 2,150 people affected by wildfires and drought in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni through integrated interventions in Health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Livelihoods and Basic Needs, and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA). By the end of the operation, a total of 2,040 people had been reached through the activities implemented under the operation.

Operation strategy rationale

The response strategy was designed to address the most significant humanitarian impacts caused by wildfires and prolonged drought in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni.

While the operation was initially launched in response to the effects of wildfires, subsequent assessments revealed that drought-related impacts had become the primary concern in many affected communities, leading to an adjustment of the initial response strategy to better address evolving needs related to water access, health conditions, livelihoods and household recovery capacities.

These impacts affected access to water, health conditions, livelihoods and household recovery capacities. As a result, the operation prioritized a multisectoral response integrating Livelihoods and Basic Needs, Health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) interventions.

I. LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

The strategy incorporated Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) as the primary modality to support households affected by the economic consequences of wildfires and drought. Findings from assessments and community consultations revealed that affected families faced a wide range of recovery needs, including access to food, medicines, agricultural inputs, livestock-related expenses, the rehabilitation of productive assets and other essential household expenditures.

Cash assistance was therefore considered the most appropriate mechanism to provide flexible support, enabling households to prioritise their most urgent needs according to their specific circumstances. This approach sought to support early recovery efforts and preserve household purchasing capacity in communities affected by livelihood losses and reduced agricultural production. In addition, the intervention was complemented by guidance on the use of cash assistance and information on available services and recovery opportunities within the affected communities.

II. HEALTH

The health strategy aimed to address the increased health risks associated with wildfire exposure, prolonged drought and limited access to safe water. Particular attention was given to respiratory conditions linked to smoke exposure, waterborne diseases associated with unsafe water sources, and health risks aggravated by extreme temperatures and environmental degradation.

The approach prioritised prevention, risk reduction and community awareness measures to strengthen protective health practices, promote the early identification of health risks and reduce exposure to the main threats affecting both communities and first responders. Activities included health promotion sessions, the dissemination of key health messages and psychosocial support actions. The strategy also incorporated the distribution of respiratory protection and hygiene kits to affected families, the provision of support kits for first responders, and the strengthening of National Society branch capacities through the delivery of first aid and Psychological First Aid kits.

III. WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

As implementation progressed, assessments identified increasing challenges related to water availability, water quality and safe access to water, particularly in rural communities dependent on rivers, shallow wells and other vulnerable water sources. These findings highlighted the need to strengthen support for safe water access as drought conditions intensified.



The WASH strategy therefore focused on improving access to safer water at the household level while promoting appropriate water treatment, safe storage and hygiene practices. This approach sought to reduce the risk of waterborne diseases and strengthen communities' capacity to cope with the challenges associated with prolonged water scarcity. To support these efforts, portable household water filters were provided in dispersed communities, accompanied by training sessions to ensure their correct use and maintenance.

IV. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA)

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) was integrated as a cross-cutting component of the operation to ensure that affected communities had access to timely information, opportunities to participate in decision-making processes and mechanisms to provide feedback throughout the response.

The strategy promoted two-way communication between communities and the Bolivian Red Cross through meetings with community leaders, culturally appropriate information materials in local languages, and accessible feedback mechanisms, including a dedicated WhatsApp hotline. Post-operational feedback sessions were also conducted to capture community perspectives and inform lessons learned. This approach sought to strengthen transparency, accountability and community trust while ensuring that operational decisions remained informed by the priorities, needs and concerns expressed by affected populations.

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

The operation reached approximately 2,040 people, including 400 families affected by wildfires and prolonged drought and 40 first responders in the departments of Beni and Santa Cruz.

Assistance prioritized households most affected by the combined impacts of wildfires and drought, particularly those facing reduced access to safe water, livelihood losses and increased health risks. Priority was given to families whose livelihoods depended primarily on small-scale agriculture and livestock production, as well as households presenting heightened vulnerabilities, including older persons, people with disabilities, single-caregiver households, pregnant women and families with limited coping capacities.

Selection and prioritization were carried out in coordination with community leaders and local authorities, based on vulnerability criteria and needs identified through field assessments and community consultations.

Department of Beni – Municipality of Guayaramerín (166 families)

- 18 de Junio
- 2 de Octubre
- 26 de Marzo
- Cachuela Mamoré
- 27 de Noviembre
- San Miguel
- La Unión
- 8 de Febrero
- Santa Fe
- 14 de Septiembre
- San Francisco

Department of Santa Cruz (234 families)

a. Municipality of Concepción

- Nueva Concepción
- La Cruz
- María Auxiliadora

b. Municipality of San Ignacio de Velasco

- San Josesito del Sari



- Candelaria de Noza
- Tierra Hermosa
- Los Cusis
- Patujú
- Tacuaral

In addition to affected households, the operation also supported 40 first responders exposed to wildfire-related risks, recognising their critical role in emergency response and the need to strengthen their protection and operational capacities during the emergency.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The selection process prioritized households and individuals facing the highest levels of vulnerability and humanitarian need as a result of the combined impacts of wildfires and prolonged drought. Particular attention was given to population groups with heightened protection concerns, including pregnant women, single-caregiver households, families with children under five years of age, older persons and people with disabilities.

Targeting was based on vulnerability criteria and needs identified through field assessments, community consultations and coordination with local leaders and authorities. The Bolivian Red Cross (BRC) leveraged its strong community presence and established relationships with local stakeholders to identify households facing the greatest challenges, particularly those with limited or no access to government assistance mechanisms and other forms of support.

The operation also prioritized first responders working directly with affected families and communities, including volunteer firefighters engaged in wildfire suppression activities. This approach was aligned with the BRC's institutional strategy of strengthening local response capacities and supporting frontline personnel exposed to increased operational and health risks during the emergency.

Total Assisted Population

Assisted Women	612	Rural	100%
Assisted Girls (under 18)	408	Urban	0%
Assisted Men	612	People with disabilities (estimated)	3%
Assisted Boys (under 18)	408		
Total Assisted Population	2,040		
Total Targeted Population	2,150		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	No
Does your National Society have prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy?	No



Does your National Society have child protection/child safeguarding policy?	No
Does your National Society have whistleblower protection policy?	No
Does your National Society have anti-sexual harassment policy?	No

Please analyse and indicate potential risks for this operation, its root causes and mitigation actions.

Risk	Mitigation action
Limited availability of volunteers in Santa Cruz due to personal commitments and the extended deployment periods required to reach remote communities.	Activity plans were developed jointly with volunteers and branches to optimize the availability of human resources, facilitate scheduling and ensure adequate volunteer participation throughout the implementation period.
Increased operational costs and delays due to fuel shortages in Bolivia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities were monitored regularly to identify potential delays and operational constraints. - Workplans remained flexible to allow adjustments in implementation schedules and ensure the achievement of operational objectives despite mobility challenges and fluctuations in fuel availability.
Potential politicization of humanitarian assistance during the national elections held in 2025 and the subnational electoral process in early 2026.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The operation maintained strict adherence to the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. - Continuous monitoring was conducted to identify and address any potential misuse of humanitarian assistance, while communication activities promoted awareness of the humanitarian mandate of the Bolivian Red Cross and the impartial nature of the assistance provided.
Difficult access to communities due to long distances, unpaved roads, forest tracks and limited transportation infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative access routes were identified whenever possible, and coordination with local authorities and community leaders facilitated access to targeted communities. - Operational planning incorporated additional travel time and logistical arrangements to ensure continuity of activities.
Beginning of the rainy season, which increased the risk of flooding and reduced accessibility to some communities due to road deterioration and rising river levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity schedules were adjusted when required to ensure the safety of communities, volunteers and staff. - Alternative routes and transportation options were assessed and incorporated into operational planning to minimize disruptions.



Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:

The security context during the implementation of the operation presented a number of challenges that required continuous monitoring and adaptation of operational arrangements. Despite these constraints, activities were implemented as planned through close coordination with local authorities, adherence to security procedures and flexible operational planning.

One of the main operational challenges was related to social protests in the department of La Paz, where most relief items, equipment and operational supplies were procured. These disruptions affected transportation routes and created delays in the movement of goods towards the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni. To mitigate these risks, procurement and logistics arrangements were adjusted, including the direct delivery of supplies by vendors to the operational areas whenever feasible.

Access to remote communities also presented challenges, particularly during the onset of the rainy season. Heavy rainfall affected unpaved roads and reduced mobility in several areas, requiring route adjustments and temporary delays to ensure the safety of staff and volunteers. In Guayaramerín, where access depends on crossing the Mamoré River by boat, changing weather conditions and rising river levels required the implementation of additional precautionary measures and contingency planning.

The operation was further implemented in a broader context characterised by security concerns associated with criminal activity in border areas, social unrest and limited institutional capacities related to public security. In addition, concerns related to gender-based violence and other protection risks remained relevant within the wider operating environment. These factors required continuous risk analysis, close coordination with local authorities and the application of security measures to support safe access and operational continuity.

Finally, a security incident involving gunfire was reported in Guayaramerín at the conclusion of one operational activity. Although the incident did not directly affect personnel or operation activities, the situation was closely monitored and coordinated with local police authorities to ensure the safe return of staff and volunteers.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

Implementation



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 119,889
Targeted Persons: 2,000
Assisted Persons: 2,000
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of families assisted through MPCA	400	400
Number of feasibility and market monitoring studies conducted	1	2
Percentage of households participating in post-distribution survey	80	76



Narrative description of achievements

I. Market assessment, targeting and operational preparedness

Prior to implementation, two market assessments were conducted, one in the department of Santa Cruz and another in the municipality of Guayaramerín, department of Beni. Both assessments covered the main commercial, financial and construction supply markets and informed the operational design of the intervention.

Needs assessments and beneficiary identification were carried out through differentiated approaches adapted to the context of each location. In Santa Cruz, the process consisted of direct visits to communities, where vulnerability criteria were applied to develop a preliminary list of households. The list was subsequently validated by community members and local leaders, ensuring transparency and community acceptance.

In Guayaramerín, community authorities participated in the initial identification of households using the same vulnerability criteria. The Bolivian Red Cross subsequently conducted house-to-house and plot-to-plot verification visits to confirm eligibility. Once the information had been validated, household surveys and needs assessments were completed, ensuring transparency and community endorsement of the process.

Prior to the distribution of assistance, in-person orientation sessions were conducted with participating households to explain the cash withdrawal process and provide recommendations on personal safety before, during and after collecting the transfer.

II. Cash transfer implementation

Through the Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) programme, 400 families affected by wildfires and drought received cash assistance, reaching approximately 2,000 people. Each household received BOB 2,400 (CHF 300) to support the coverage of priority needs and recovery activities.

During implementation, beneficiary records were updated in a limited number of cases. Five primary recipients were temporarily unavailable because they had travelled to Brazil nut harvesting areas, where communication is often interrupted for one to two months. In these cases, second- or third-line family members were designated as substitute recipients following community validation and under monitoring by the operation team, ensuring that the assistance ultimately reached the intended beneficiaries. Additional beneficiary updates were carried out in five cases (four in Concepción and one in San Ignacio de Velasco) after community leaders reported that the original recipients had migrated outside the communities.

Cash transfers were delivered through MoneyGram in coordination with local financial institutions.

• Beni – Guayaramerín

- BancoSol
- Crecer
- Jesús Nazareno

Communities travelled to the municipal centre to access payment points. Volunteers from the Guayaramerín Branch were deployed at each financial institution to assist beneficiaries, provide guidance and support a safe and transparent process. Branch personnel remained at the payment locations until the last beneficiary had received the transfer.

• Santa Cruz

- Crecer
- Banco Económico
- Banco Ganadero

In San Ignacio de Velasco, beneficiaries travelled to the municipal centre to collect the transfers. Local authorities facilitated transportation, prioritising older persons to ensure their access to the payment points. Monitoring and follow-up were conducted through community leaders and direct contact with beneficiaries.

III. Assistance delivered

A total of 400 families received multipurpose cash assistance, including 234 families in the department of Santa Cruz and 166 families in the municipality of Guayaramerín, department of Beni. Of the total households assisted, 60.5 per cent were represented by women and 39.5 per cent were represented by men.



- Santa Cruz – 234 families assisted

Municipality of San Ignacio de Velasco: 163 families

- Candelaria de Noza: 59
- Tierra Hermosa: 58
- San Josecito del Sari: 25
- Patujú: 8
- Tacuaral: 8
- Los Cusis: 5

- Municipality of Concepción: 71 families

- Nueva Concepción: 50
- La Cruz: 15
- María Auxiliadora: 6

- Beni – 166 families assisted

Municipality of Guayaramerín: 166 families

- San Miguel: 26
- 18 de Junio: 20
- 2 de Octubre: 20
- La Unión: 20
- 14 de Septiembre: 17
- Cachuela Mamoré: 13
- San Francisco: 13
- 8 de Febrero: 10
- Santa Fe: 10
- 26 de Marzo: 9
- 27 de Noviembre: 8

IV. Post-distribution monitoring

Post-distribution monitoring was conducted through in-person visits to communities and reached 304 families, representing 76 per cent of households assisted through the cash programme (189 families in Santa Cruz and 115 families in Beni).

Among respondents, 67.11 per cent were adults, 18.75 per cent older persons and 14.14 per cent youth. Women represented 65.79 per cent of respondents, while men accounted for 34.21 per cent.

The monitoring results showed that households primarily used the assistance to address immediate needs and strengthen their livelihoods. The most frequently reported expenditures were:

- Food: 69.7% (212 families)
- Livelihoods/work-related activities: 55.3% (168 families)
- Health: 51.3% (156 families)
- Education: 39.8% (121 families)
- Hygiene products: 12.5% (38 families)
- Savings: 9.2% (28 families)

Additional expenditures included public services (3.3%), household items (2.0%), debt repayment (2.0%) and housing improvements (1.6%).

Important differences were observed between departments. In Santa Cruz, households prioritised food (76.7%), health (60.8%) and education (59.3%), reflecting a stronger focus on meeting immediate basic needs. In Beni, households prioritised livelihoods and income-generating activities (76.5%), followed by food (58.3%) and health (35.7%), demonstrating a greater emphasis on restoring productive activities and household income. These results highlight the flexibility of cash assistance in enabling households to respond to context-specific needs and recovery priorities.



Lessons Learnt

- Applying different targeting and validation methodologies according to the local context proved effective in ensuring transparency and community acceptance. While community validation was appropriate in Santa Cruz, household-level verification in Guayaramerín provided an additional layer of accountability. This experience demonstrated that adapting targeting approaches to local realities can strengthen trust and improve the quality of beneficiary selection processes.
- The active involvement of community leaders and authorities throughout the identification, validation and beneficiary substitution processes was critical to maintaining community acceptance and preventing disputes. Their participation facilitated communication, strengthened transparency and contributed to the smooth implementation of the programme.
- Providing clear information on cash withdrawal procedures, eligibility criteria and personal safety recommendations before distributions contributed to building beneficiary confidence and reducing potential risks associated with cash collection and handling. Community sensitisation sessions also helped beneficiaries better understand the purpose and use of the assistance.
- Encouraging households to prepare a simple family spending plan before receiving the transfer helped beneficiaries identify and prioritise their most urgent needs. Although some families had to adjust their spending decisions due to unforeseen circumstances, particularly health-related expenses, the exercise contributed to more informed and deliberate use of the assistance and can be considered a good practice for future cash interventions.
- The presence of volunteers at payment points, particularly in Guayaramerín, contributed to a safe, respectful and transparent distribution process. Accompaniment throughout the entire cash withdrawal process reinforced beneficiary confidence and highlighted the value of direct support in remote locations where access to financial services may be limited.

Challenges

- In municipalities such as Concepción, the absence of financial institutions required beneficiaries to travel considerable distances to access payment points. This generated additional transportation costs, increased travel times and, in some cases, exposed beneficiaries to additional security and logistical challenges.
- Temporary and permanent migration among some targeted households required adjustments to beneficiary lists during implementation. Seasonal livelihood activities, particularly Brazil nut harvesting, as well as migration outside the communities, necessitated beneficiary substitutions and additional verification processes to ensure that assistance reached the intended households.
- While transportation support was arranged for older persons in San Ignacio de Velasco, access to payment points remained more challenging in other remote communities. In these cases, branch teams relied on remote follow-up and coordination through community leaders to support beneficiaries throughout the process.
- The implementation highlighted the limitations of relying exclusively on formal financial service providers in highly remote areas. For future interventions in locations with limited financial coverage and significant access constraints, alternative delivery modalities, including secure direct cash distributions where appropriate and feasible, could be considered to improve accessibility and reduce the burden on beneficiaries.



Budget: CHF 27,628
Targeted Persons: 2,150
Assisted Persons: 2,040
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of families receiving respiratory protection and hygiene kits	400	400



Number of first responders receiving support kits	150	40
Number of individuals reached through health promotion activities	400	400

Narrative description of achievements

I. Distribution of respiratory hygiene kits to affected households

A total of 400 respiratory hygiene kits were distributed to families affected by wildfires and drought. Each kit included respiratory masks, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, protective goggles and educational materials containing key prevention messages.

The distribution was carried out as follows:

a. Beni

- Municipality of Guayaramerín: 166 kits distributed.

b. Santa Cruz

- Municipality of Concepción: 73 kits distributed.

- Municipality of San Ignacio de Velasco: 161 kits distributed.

The kits contributed to strengthening household protection measures against respiratory risks associated with smoke exposure, dust and poor air quality.

II. Community health promotion and prevention activities

Health education sessions on Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI), respiratory diseases and Acute Diarrhoeal Diseases (ADD) were conducted alongside the kit distributions. These activities reached all assisted families, as well as children and accompanying family members who participated in the distribution events and training sessions.

In the department of Santa Cruz, the sessions were supported by large-format printed materials presenting key preventive measures, facilitating the understanding of health messages among participants.

In the department of Beni, manually prepared flipchart-sized materials were used and complemented by practical demonstrations on the correct use of the items included in the kits. Particular emphasis was placed on handwashing practices as a key preventive measure to reduce health risks.

In addition, digital health education materials were developed and disseminated, including content on respiratory disease prevention, safe health practices and emotional wellbeing.

III. Support to frontline responders

A total of 40 responder support kits were provided to frontline responders from the Bolivian Red Cross Guayaramerín Branch, strengthening the protection of the municipality's primary wildfire response team against smoke, dust and other wildfire-related hazards. Each kit included protective goggles, a hydration bag, hand sanitizer and wet wipes.

To further strengthen emergency response capacities, responder support points were established and equipped in the Santa Cruz Departmental Branch and the Guayaramerín Municipal Branch. Each branch received one responder support point kit consisting of reinforced tents (2), tables (3), chairs (12) and rechargeable LED lighting units (5), providing safer and more functional conditions for emergency response operations and supporting the continuity of response activities during emergencies.

IV. Strengthening branch emergency health capacities

The operation contributed to strengthening branch preparedness and response capacities through the provision of emergency health equipment and psychosocial support resources.

Two Physical First Aid Kits were delivered, one to the Santa Cruz Departmental Branch and one to the Guayaramerín Municipal Branch. These kits included long spinal boards (2) with cervical immobilization accessories (2), inflatable splint sets (2), digital pulse oximeters (2)



and rechargeable diagnostic flashlights (2), enhancing the branches' ability to provide first aid during emergencies.

In addition, two Psychological First Aid Kits were delivered, one to the Santa Cruz Departmental Branch and one to the Guayaramerín Municipal Branch. Each kit contained materials designed to support Psychological First Aid and psychosocial support activities with children, adults and families affected by emergencies. The kits included blankets (2), notebooks (10), pencils (20), colouring books (10), crayons (10 boxes), modelling clay (10 sets), toys (5), stuffed animals (5), a small ball (1), tissues (5 packs), wet wipes (5 packs), snacks (20), sweets (20 packs) and other recreational and educational materials intended to facilitate emotional support, stress reduction and community-based psychosocial activities.

V. Psychological First Aid

Psychological First Aid support was provided to community members during health promotion activities conducted in three communities of the municipality of Guayaramerín. The interventions included active listening, emotional support and follow-up, and primarily responded to situations identified during community interactions.

The support provided addressed concerns related to food insecurity, feelings of frustration and abandonment associated with difficult socio-economic conditions, and grief experienced following the loss of a family member. These interventions contributed to providing immediate emotional support and identifying individuals requiring additional accompaniment.

Lessons Learnt

- The distribution of respiratory hygiene kits highlighted the importance of understanding how communities adapt and repurpose relief items according to their context and needs. While the kits were designed to address health risks associated with wildfires, community members identified additional uses for some items, such as the cloth bag, which was used for filtering water. This demonstrated that relief items can provide complementary benefits beyond their original purpose and reinforced the value of incorporating community feedback into the design of assistance packages.
- Community participation played a key role in the effectiveness of health promotion activities. The active involvement of participants, including their willingness to share information and support older persons during training sessions, contributed to greater engagement and facilitated the dissemination of key health messages within communities. Future interventions can build on these existing community support networks to strengthen outreach and learning processes.
- Field visits highlighted the importance of considering complementary needs that may influence community participation and well-being during humanitarian activities. Throughout the operation, older persons frequently expressed concerns related to food insecurity and limited resources. Providing food during community activities helped create a more conducive environment for participation, strengthened trust between communities and the National Society, and contributed to a more people-centred approach during field engagement.

Challenges

- The operation was unable to distribute the full number of respiratory support kits originally planned for first responders. Following the end of the emergency phase, many responders returned to their regular activities and were no longer available to receive the kits. As a result, 110 of the 150 kits initially procured remained in the strategic warehouse of the Bolivian Red Cross National Headquarters. This situation limited the planned coverage and highlighted the importance of establishing stronger coordination and distribution mechanisms with first-response teams to ensure timely delivery of assistance while emergency personnel remain actively engaged in response activities.
- The transportation of supplies required for assembling the kits presented logistical challenges due to limited connectivity between departments and delays in the delivery of consignments. Weather conditions and the transportation methods used occasionally affected the condition of some materials upon arrival. In particular, a small number of cloth bags were received with humidity-related damage and required replacement by the supplier before kit assembly could be completed. Although these issues did not significantly affect implementation, they generated additional coordination and logistical efforts.
- The operation team faced challenges associated with exposure to situations of vulnerability identified during community visits, particularly among older persons experiencing food insecurity, social isolation and economic hardship. Listening to and supporting individuals facing these circumstances generated emotional strain among some volunteers during the initial stages of implementation. To address this challenge, accompaniment and emotional support responsibilities were shared among branch leadership, programme staff and unit focal points, allowing volunteers to remain focused on training activities, surveys, distributions and other operational tasks while ensuring that vulnerable individuals continued to receive appropriate support and follow-up.





Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 17,493

Targeted Persons: 2,000

Assisted Persons: 2,000

Targeted Male: -

Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of families receiving water purification filters.	400	400
Number of people receiving training in water purification using filters	400	400

Narrative description of achievements

I. Capacity strengthening for volunteers

To support the implementation of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) component, training processes were conducted for volunteers through a combination of virtual sessions facilitated by both the project team and the supplier, as well as practical face-to-face demonstrations on the assembly and operation of the household water filters. These activities strengthened volunteers' technical knowledge and ensured their ability to replicate the process and provide guidance to communities during distributions.

A total of 26 volunteers were trained, including 20 volunteers from the Guayaramerín Branch and 6 volunteers from the Santa Cruz Branch.

II. Distribution of household water filters

A total of 400 household water filters were distributed to 400 families, benefiting approximately 2,000 people affected by drought and water scarcity in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni.

Each filter kit consisted of two plastic buckets, two securing rings, one tap, two lids and two ceramic filter candles, with a filtration capacity of up to 20 litres of water.

The distribution was carried out as follows:

a. Santa Cruz – 234 filters distributed

Municipality of San Ignacio de Velasco: 163 filters

- Tierra Hermosa: 59
- Candelaria de Noza: 58
- San Josecito del Sari: 25
- Patujú: 8
- Tacuaral: 8
- Los Cusis: 5

Municipality of Concepción: 71 filters

- Nueva Concepción: 50
- La Cruz: 15
- María Auxiliadora: 6

b. Beni – 166 filters distributed



Municipality of Guayaramerín: 166 filters

- San Miguel: 26
- 18 de Junio: 20
- 2 de Octubre: 20
- La Unión: 20
- 14 de Septiembre: 17
- Cachuela Mamoré: 13
- San Francisco: 13
- 8 de Febrero: 10
- Santa Fe: 10
- 26 de Marzo: 9
- 27 de Noviembre: 8

The distribution of household water filters contributed to improving access to safer water for families affected by drought, particularly in communities that relied on rivers, streams and other vulnerable water sources during periods of reduced water availability.

III. Community training on water treatment and safe water management

Practical training sessions were conducted during the distribution process for the 400 individuals who collected the household water filters, as well as accompanying family members who attended the sessions. The trainings covered the assembly, use and maintenance of the filters and included demonstrations on the installation process, filter maintenance requirements and recommendations for safe water handling and storage.

Special attention was given to older persons and individuals who required additional support. In these cases, filters were assembled directly by the project team and volunteers to ensure their proper installation and use.

Lessons Learnt

- The combination of virtual and face-to-face training modalities proved effective in strengthening volunteer capacities for the assembly, installation and demonstration of household water filters. This approach enabled volunteers to confidently support families during distributions, facilitate practical demonstrations and optimize delivery times across the targeted communities.
- Community ownership emerged as a key factor for the sustainability of the intervention. In several communities in the municipality of Guayaramerín, including San Francisco, 14 de Septiembre, 18 de Junio and 2 de Octubre, community members demonstrated their commitment to maintaining the filters by organizing the future replacement of the ceramic filter candles once they reach the end of their useful life. This experience highlighted the importance of promoting local ownership and shared responsibility from the outset of WASH interventions.
- The provision of household water filters proved to be an appropriate solution for improving access to safe water in communities affected by drought. However, field experience indicated that larger-capacity filtration systems could further enhance the impact of future interventions by increasing the volume of water available for household consumption and reducing the frequency of refilling, particularly in larger households.

Challenges

- The transportation of household water filters from the department of Santa Cruz to Guayaramerín experienced delays, requiring adjustments to the planned distribution schedule. The main cause was the rise in the water level of the Mamoré River, which temporarily prevented the transport company's bus from reaching its destination and affected the timely delivery of supplies.
- The absence of a specialized and secure transportation service for fragile items resulted in damage to some of the filters during transit. Five filters arrived damaged in Guayaramerín and one additional filter was affected during transportation to other intervention areas. To address this situation, coordination was established with the supplier to arrange the replacement of the damaged units, ensuring that all families ultimately received filters in good condition and suitable for use.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 5,711



Targeted Persons: 0
Assisted Persons: 1,235
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Percentage of surveyed individuals reporting receipt of useful and applicable health information	60	100
Number of community meetings held for planning and accountability	12	12

Narrative description of achievements

I. Community information and risk communication

As part of the communication strategy, informational banners containing respiratory disease prevention messages and National Society contact information were developed and installed in strategic locations, including schools and community gathering spaces. These materials supported the dissemination of key health messages and increased community awareness of available support and referral channels.

II. Two-way communication and feedback mechanisms

A dedicated WhatsApp communication channel was established and shared with communities to facilitate direct communication with the project team. The platform was used to respond to questions related to beneficiary substitutions due to health conditions or temporary migration, upcoming field visits, eligibility criteria and requests for inclusion in assistance activities. The channel also supported operational coordination and helped maintain regular contact with community members throughout implementation.

III. Community participation and engagement

From the planning stage onwards, regular coordination and planning meetings were conducted with community leaders and local authorities. Information on the objectives, scope and implementation arrangements of the operation was shared with municipal authorities, the Casa del Campesino (Farmers' House) and community representatives, helping to foster participation, transparency and community ownership throughout the intervention.

Community feedback was also incorporated through satisfaction surveys conducted using Kobo. These visits provided valuable information on community perceptions of the activities and contributed to operational adjustments, including modifications to activity schedules, training methodologies and the organisation of community sessions based on participant preferences and needs.

IV. Accountability to affected populations

As part of the operational closure process, 12 accountability sessions were conducted through focus group discussions with participating communities. These sessions provided an opportunity to present the results of the intervention and gather feedback on the assistance provided, including cash transfers, training activities and overall implementation processes.

Community feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Participants highlighted the importance of receiving support in remote areas where institutional presence is limited and noted that, in some cases, this was the first time they had received humanitarian assistance of this kind. Communities also recognised the role of the Bolivian Red Cross as a trusted actor and emphasised the importance of continuing to strengthen the operational capacity of the Guayaramerín Branch, particularly through improved mobility and equipment to support future emergency response activities.

V. Community perception and satisfaction

A total of 247 families participated in surveys aimed at assessing the usefulness of the activities implemented, perceptions of the project and access to health-related products.



Among the 245 families that reported participating in the health and WASH training sessions, 100 per cent indicated that the activities had been useful. In addition, 83.4 per cent of respondents reported difficulties accessing products to protect their respiratory health in their communities, highlighting the relevance of the assistance provided.

The surveys also showed a positive impact on community perceptions of the National Society. A total of 93.52 per cent of respondents stated that their perception of the Bolivian Red Cross had improved as a result of the assistance received, while 6.07 per cent indicated that they had not previously been familiar with the organisation.

Lessons Learnt

- Although suggestion boxes were incorporated based on lessons learned from previous operations to provide a confidential feedback mechanism, their use remained limited. Community members preferred to share comments, concerns and suggestions openly during meetings and activities, reflecting the trust built through previous engagement with the Bolivian Red Cross. This experience highlighted the importance of adapting feedback mechanisms to local communication preferences rather than relying exclusively on standard tools.
- In the department of Santa Cruz, participants indicated that although they were able to write, written communication was not commonly used within their communities. Verbal feedback was preferred and proved effective for collecting suggestions and concerns. This reinforced the value of maintaining multiple feedback channels and prioritising culturally appropriate communication approaches.
- The operation highlighted the importance of using visual communication materials to support community engagement and information sharing. Field experience showed that community members more easily understood and retained information presented through visual aids and practical demonstrations, particularly in rural settings. Future interventions could further strengthen communication efforts through the increased use of graphic materials and participatory learning tools.
- Continuous coordination with community leaders proved essential for facilitating access to communities, promoting participation and ensuring the timely dissemination of information. Community leaders acted as a key bridge between the operation and the population, contributing to higher levels of engagement and supporting the effective implementation of activities.

Challenges

- Several communities had limited or no access to communication services due to the absence of reliable mobile phone coverage, radio signals or television broadcasts. In some locations, access to information depended on neighbouring communities or private farms. This limited the timely dissemination of information and created additional challenges for communicating activity schedules and operational updates.
- In some communities of the municipality of Guayaramerín, community leaders temporarily left their communities after becoming involved in activities linked to political groups or municipal affairs. As a result, information regarding some planned activities did not always reach community members in a timely manner. To mitigate this challenge, the operation strengthened direct communication with beneficiaries using contact information collected during assessments and registration processes, helping to ensure participation in the final project activities.
- Maintaining regular communication with highly dispersed and remote communities required additional effort and flexibility from branch teams. The experience highlighted the importance of establishing multiple communication channels and maintaining updated beneficiary contact information to reduce dependency on a single community focal point.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 27,796

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Targeted Male: -

Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
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Number of monitoring visits conducted	6	6
Number of rapid response personnel deployed	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

I. Surge support deployment

In September 2025, the IFRC deployed a Rapid Response System (Surge) Operations Manager for a period of one month to support the Bolivian Red Cross during the initial phase of the operation. The deployment strengthened operational coordination, planning and implementation arrangements, while providing technical guidance to support the start-up of activities and alignment with IFRC procedures and standards.

The deployment also contributed to strengthening coordination between the National Society, the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for the Andean Countries and the IFRC Regional Office for the Americas, facilitating timely technical support in areas such as operations management, planning, reporting and programme implementation.

II. Monitoring visits and technical support

Joint field visits conducted by the Bolivian Red Cross National Headquarters and the IFRC Operations Manager provided direct oversight of the operation and strengthened evidence-based decision-making throughout implementation. These missions enabled the verification of needs and operational conditions in the municipalities of San Ignacio de Velasco and Guayaramerín, helping to validate assessment findings and confirm priority areas for intervention.

The visits also strengthened coordination with local authorities and key stakeholders, including the Guayaramerín Risk Management Unit, the Environment Secretariat of San Ignacio de Velasco and community-based organisations such as the Chiquitano Forest Conservation Foundation. These exchanges facilitated information sharing, improved operational coordination and supported the identification of opportunities to strengthen the response.

In addition, the monitoring missions provided valuable insights into community priorities, operational challenges and emerging needs, contributing to subsequent adjustments to the operational strategy and supporting the continued relevance of the intervention. The visits also enabled the identification of good practices related to community organisation, local coordination and the efficient use of resources that may inform future operations.

Lessons Learnt

- Field monitoring visits remained essential for validating assessment findings, understanding evolving community needs and ensuring that operational decisions are informed by direct observation and engagement with affected populations.
- The operation highlighted the importance of maintaining flexibility in operational planning. Geographic, social and logistical conditions varied significantly across the intervention areas, requiring continuous adaptation to ensure effective implementation and the achievement of planned results.
- Regular field presence strengthened quality assurance processes by facilitating the early identification of operational challenges, emerging needs and potential adjustments required during implementation.
- The visits also reinforced the importance of maintaining clear and timely communication between National Headquarters, branches and operational teams to ensure a common understanding of priorities, progress and challenges throughout the operation.
- The deployment of a Surge Operations Manager during the initial phase of the operation demonstrated the value of rapid technical support in strengthening operational planning, coordination and decision-making. The presence of dedicated surge capacity facilitated field assessments, supported the identification of evolving needs and helped ensure that the response remained aligned with operational priorities and IFRC standards. This experience highlighted the importance of timely surge deployments in complex emergencies, particularly when National Societies are managing multiple concurrent operations and rapidly changing humanitarian contexts.



Challenges

- Due to time and logistical constraints, it was not possible to visit all targeted communities during the field missions. As a result, monitoring efforts focused on priority locations and areas where additional verification of needs was required.
- A significant proportion of the available mission time was dedicated to needs assessments and coordination activities in Santa Cruz, followed by visits to Concepción, San Ignacio de Velasco and Guayaramerín. This limited the time available for broader field coverage and more extensive follow-up visits across all intervention areas.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 44,958

Targeted Persons: 40

Assisted Persons: 56

Targeted Male: -

Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of lessons learned workshops conducted	1	1
Number of monitoring and technical support visits to branches by National Society staff	6	6
Number of volunteers trained in operational safety and safeguarding	40	56
Number of volunteers trained in technical operational priorities (MHPSS and/or CVA)	40	56

Narrative description of achievements

I. Volunteer capacity strengthening

The operation contributed to strengthening the capacities of Bolivian Red Cross volunteers through a series of training activities delivered both virtually and in person. A total of 56 volunteers participated, including 30 from the Guayaramerín Branch and 26 from the Santa Cruz Branch.

Training sessions covered topics such as Basic Institutional Training (BIT), Safer Access, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), and health promotion focused on the prevention of respiratory and diarrhoeal diseases. Due to connectivity limitations in the Guayaramerín Branch, part of the training programme was conducted face to face and included an overview of the DREF operation and its objectives.

In response to volunteers' interests and operational needs, additional training on burns management was incorporated to strengthen knowledge and practical skills relevant to the wildfire context.

Overall, these activities enhanced volunteer preparedness, reinforced operational capacities and increased the ability of branch teams to support emergency response efforts in their respective communities.

II. Organisational learning and operational reflection

A Lessons Learned Workshop was conducted with the participation of representatives from the IFRC, Bolivian Red Cross National Headquarters, branch leadership, project staff and volunteers from Santa Cruz and Guayaramerín.



The workshop included a review of the operation against key evaluation criteria, the development of a timeline of major operational milestones and a collective analysis of achievements, challenges and opportunities for improvement. The process facilitated institutional reflection and highlighted progress made in areas that had represented challenges in previous operations, particularly regarding community coordination, communication processes and planning between branches, communities and National Headquarters.

The exercise also contributed to capturing operational learning and identifying recommendations to strengthen future emergency responses.

III. Branch accompaniment and technical support

The operation included regular monitoring and support visits to participating branches to strengthen implementation, coordination and operational follow-up.

The project coordinator conducted four visits to the department of Santa Cruz to support coordination efforts and the implementation of planned activities alongside field staff and branch teams. In addition, the PMER Officer carried out two monitoring missions to the municipality of Guayaramerín, Beni. The first mission focused on planning and coordination with branch volunteers, community leaders and local stakeholders and included approximately two weeks of field support during activity implementation.

During the second mission, the National Disaster Risk Management Coordinator joined field visits to review progress and verify implementation in the targeted communities. The mission also included the participation of the National Communication and Dissemination Officer, who supported the production of audiovisual materials, photography and visibility products in coordination with the branch.

These visits contributed to strengthening branch capacities, supporting operational problem-solving and reinforcing coordination between National Headquarters, branches and communities throughout the implementation of the operation.

Lessons Learnt

- Virtual training sessions proved to be a useful modality for reaching volunteers from different branches and facilitating participation across geographically dispersed locations. However, the effectiveness of this approach depended largely on local connectivity conditions and the availability of appropriate tools for accessing and disseminating learning materials. Future capacity-strengthening initiatives should consider context-specific adaptations and complementary modalities where connectivity is limited.
- The dissemination and application of lessons learned from previous operations contributed positively to the implementation of this response. Building on recommendations and experiences from earlier interventions helped strengthen planning, coordination and operational decision-making. This highlighted the importance of continuing to systematize, disseminate and operationalize institutional learning across branches and programmes.
- Regular analysis of activities throughout implementation enabled timely adjustments to operational strategies and strengthened collaboration between National Headquarters and branches. Continuous reflection and adaptive management contributed to improved ownership of the operation and reinforced the value of learning processes as a tool for strengthening future emergency responses.
- The active involvement of governance representatives, branch leadership and the IFRC throughout the operation provided an additional layer of support and oversight for volunteers and operational teams. This collaborative approach contributed to strengthening follow-up mechanisms, promoting staff and volunteer wellbeing and ensuring more coordinated implementation of activities across different levels of the National Society.

Challenges

- Adverse weather conditions and changing environmental circumstances created challenges for staff mobility and field monitoring activities. During one monitoring mission, the National Disaster Risk Management Coordinator experienced travel delays after a flight was cancelled due to weather conditions, requiring an overnight stay in Trinidad, Beni, before continuing the mission. Alternative land transportation options were also affected by rising river levels, which limited road access and generated additional delays.
- Unstable internet connectivity in some operational areas affected the delivery of virtual training sessions and limited the ability of some volunteers to participate fully in online capacity-strengthening activities. This highlighted the need to maintain flexible training modalities and provide alternative learning mechanisms in areas with limited telecommunications infrastructure.



Financial Report



DREF Operation Final Report (CHF)

Date from: 1 sep. 2025 to 31 may. 2026

MDRBO019 - Bolivia - Wildfires

Operating timeframe: *Start date: 02-sep.-2025 End date: 31-mar.-2026*

Appeal launch date: *12-sep.-2025*

I. Summary

	Actual (CHF)
Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	259.300
DREF Response Pillar	259.300
Expenditure	-242.725
Closing Balance	16.575

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			
PO02 - Livelihoods			
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	119.889	122.115	-2.226
PO04 - Health	27.628	27.962	-334
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	17.493	18.639	-1.146
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion	0		0
PO07 - Education			
PO08 - Migration			
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	15.826	0	15.826
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	5.711	5.857	-146
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			
Planned Operations Total	186.546	174.574	11.974
		0	0
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			
EA02 - Secretariat Services	27.796	18.823	8.973
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	44.958	49.329	-4.371
Planned Operations Total	72.754	68.152	4.602
Total	259.300	242.725	16.576

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Prepared on 02-jul.-2026

Page 1 of 2

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

Please explain variances (if any)

This IFRC-DREF operation had an approved budget of CHF 259,300, of which CHF 242,725(93.61 per cent) was spent. The remaining balance of CHF 16,575 will be returned to the DREF fund.

The main budget variations resulted from adjustments approved through the Operational Update to better respond to evolving needs identified during implementation.



One of the most significant changes was an increase of approximately 85 per cent in the vehicle rental budget line. This adjustment was financed through the reallocation of resources from the fuel budget line and from the Project Coordinator/PMER/CVA staffing line. The increase responded to the absence of operational vehicles in the Santa Cruz and Guayaramerín branches and ensured the availability of transportation required to reach remote communities and implement planned activities.

A further budget adjustment was made to incorporate Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities into the operation following assessments that identified drought-related water access challenges as a priority need. Approximately CHF 17,500 was reallocated to support the procurement and distribution of household water filters and related activities. Resources were transferred from budget lines under Protection, Gender and Inclusion; Multipurpose Cash Assistance; Emergency Health Services; Community Engagement and Accountability; National Society Development; and Volunteer Development. This reallocation enabled the operation to address emerging WASH needs while maintaining the overall objectives of the response.

All budget revisions and reallocations were reviewed and approved through the operational update process in accordance with IFRC procedures.

Remaining Relief Items

At the closure of the operation, 110 first responder respiratory support kits, containing protective goggles, a hydration bag, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and wet wipes, remained in stock at the strategic warehouse of the Bolivian Red Cross National Headquarters. These kits were originally procured for firefighters and frontline responders; however, following the end of the emergency phase, a significant number of responders had returned to their regular activities and were no longer available to receive the planned assistance.

The remaining kits will be retained by the Bolivian Red Cross for use in future emergency responses, subject to authorization for their mobilization by the IFRC DREF team in line with the applicable procedures.

-Of the remaining CHF 16,575, approximately 68% corresponds to funds that were not used for monitoring and/or technical visits. Although three follow-up visits had initially been planned as part of the Country Group Delegation, only one specific visit was carried out as part of this operation. Additional needs for technical support and monitoring were efficiently addressed through field missions conducted as part of other operations in the IFRC's portfolio, which made it possible to cover several operations during the same visits and ensure optimal use of resources. No additional technical support missions to the country by the IFRC Regional Office were required, as technical assistance was adequately provided through the deployment of reinforcements and supplemented by remote support, particularly from the CVA coordinator, ensuring continuous guidance throughout the implementation period.



Contact Information

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

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