DREF Final Report

Bolivia: Drought

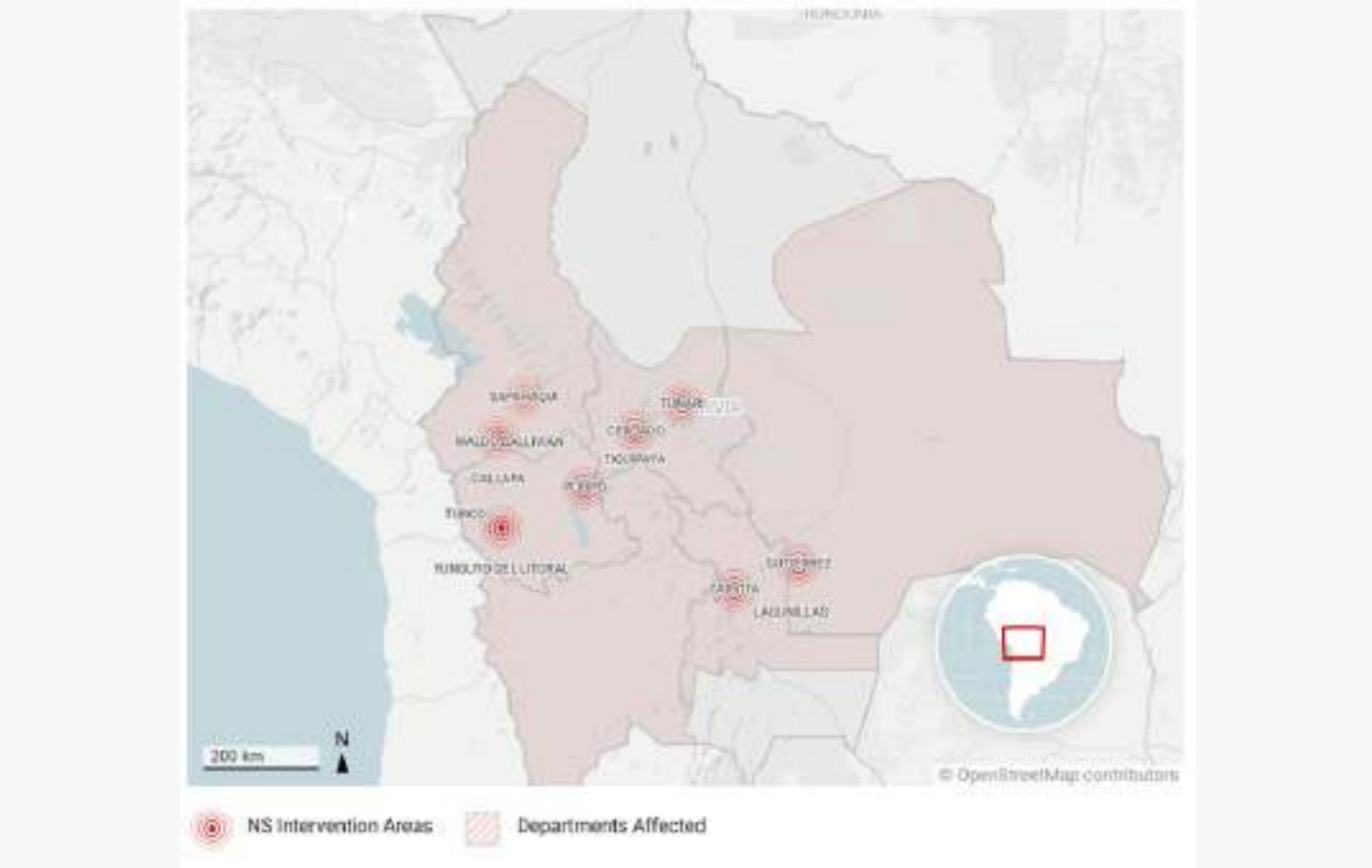
Community needs assessment and resolution of inquiries. La Paz. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Appeal: **MDRBO015**	Total DREF Allocation: **CHF 276,661**	Crisis Category: Orange	Hazard: **Drought**
Glide Number: **DR-2023-000191-BOL**	People Affected: **2,050,000 people**	People Targeted: **5,000 people**	People Assisted: **4,984 people**
Event Onset: **Slow**	Operation Start Date: **08-10-2023**	Operational End Date: **30-06-2024**	Total Operating Timeframe: **8 months**

Targeted Areas: **Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, La Paz, Oruro, Santa Cruz**

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

Description of the Event



Map of intervention areas. Source: IFRC

Date when the trigger was met

29-09-2023

What happened, where and when?

Bolivia faced a severe environmental crisis, as a result of the climate crisis, the El Niño phenomenon, and the subsequent arrival of La Niña. Extensive areas of the country suffered from droughts, water scarcity, and an anomalous increase in temperatures. During November and December 2023, temperatures reached up to 40°C. According to the National Meteorology and Hydrology Service (SENAMHI), Bolivia recorded its highest historical temperature, reaching 43°C. This situation led to the death of at least 10 people due to dehydration and heat strokes.

According to the Bolivia Drought Monitor, the macro-regions of the Altiplano, Valleys, Yungas-Chapare, and Chaco were the most affected, with significant soil moisture loss and drought conditions ranging from moderate to extreme. At the departmental level, seven of the nine departments (La Paz, Potosí, Cochabamba, Oruro, Chuquisaca, Tarija, and Santa Cruz) suffered the most severe impacts. The departments of Cochabamba and Chuquisaca issued emergency declarations, and several of their municipalities declared states of disaster.

On 21 September 2023, Cochabamba issued Decree No. 5585, declaring a state of emergency due to the water crisis and urging the population to use water resources responsibly. Rainfall in the department was the lowest recorded since 1950, with less than 200 millimeters. Similarly, on 27 September 2023, the Autonomous Departmental Government of Oruro, responding to the drought's impact on more than 200 communities, enacted Departmental Decree No. 235, declaring a departmental disaster. Chuquisaca also declared an emergency for frost and drought on 14 September, affecting more than 68,690 families.

In January 2024, extreme weather events persisted, shifting this time towards heavy rainfall. Heavy rains caused landslides in El Torno, Santa Cruz, and certain areas of La Paz, causing significant damage to homes and infrastructure. The Bolivian Red Cross reported that approximately 3,500 people were displaced. Consequently, local authorities declared a state of emergency in the affected areas, including

the departments of Potosí, Beni, Pando, Santa Cruz, La Paz, Cochabamba, and Chuquisaca.

For more information on this emergency, please review the following videos: https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/IFRCSharing/EhoriRmvgBAnKluW7O63FwBkt9z12OcD1o36l_2LO4tvw?e=Zsmo6k

Livestock loss. Oruro. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Water harvesting in rural areas. Oruro. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Meeting with authorities and community leaders. La Paz. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Meeting with community leaders. La Paz. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Distribution of jerry cans for water storage in Tunita, Santa Cruz. April 2024. Source: BRC.

Community workshop on water care. Chuquisaca. February 2024. Source: BRC

Distribution of 5000-liter tanks. Chuquisaca. April 2024. Source: BRC

Community workshops on health. Santa Cruz. February 2024. Source: BRC

Distribution of jerry cans for water storage. Santa Cruz. April 2024. Source: BRC.

Distribution of EM-1 and community training. Cochabamba. May 2024. Source: BRC

Sprayer backpack distribution. Cochabamba. April 2024. Source: BRC

Distribution of 5000-liter tanks. Cochabamba. February 2024. Source: BRC

Sprayer backpack distribution. Cochabamba. April 2024. Source: BRC

Post-distribution survey. Cochabamba. June 2024. Source: BRC

Closure of the DREF Operation. Oruro. June 2024. Source: BRC

Addressing community concerns. Cochabamba. June 2024. Source: BRC

Cracked soil. Oruro. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Crop loss. Oruro. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Community reception for the National Society team. Oruro. June 2024. Source: BRC

Focus group. Oruro. June 2024. Source: BRC

Needs analysis with the community. La Paz. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Needs assessment survey. La Paz. December 2023. Source: IFRC

Distribution of jerrycans. Santa Cruz. April 2024. Source: BRC

Scope and Scale

According to the "Bolivia National Drought Impact Report" by the Vice Ministry of Civil Defense (VIDECI), as of 20 March 2024, more than 5,380 communities and 511,610 families (approximately 2.05 million people) were coping with the consequences of the drought. The report highlighted that the most affected departments were:

- La Paz: 226,247 affected families, of which 85,887 required humanitarian assistance. 19,260 hectares of crops and 147,907 heads of livestock were impacted.
- Potosí: 51,280 affected families, with 29,235 in need of assistance across 22 municipalities. 801 hectares of crops and 5,664 heads of livestock were affected.
- Cochabamba: 72,777 affected families, of which 47,087 required assistance in 35 municipalities. 5,643 hectares of crops and 48,437 heads of livestock were impacted.
- Oruro: 42,878 affected families, with 19,672 in need of assistance across 374 communities in 30 municipalities. 2,032 hectares of crops and 279,205 heads of livestock were affected.
- Chuquisaca: 80,174 affected families, with 28,912 in need of assistance across 766 communities in 29 municipalities. 109,086 hectares of crops and 74,958 heads of livestock were impacted, including the loss of 111 heads of livestock.
- Tarija: 19,742 affected families, with 11,093 in need of assistance across 221 communities in eight municipalities.
- Santa Cruz: 18,512 affected families, with 10,770 in need of assistance across 291 communities in 12 municipalities.

The departments of La Paz, Oruro, Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz shared characteristics that increased their vulnerability to drought. All had poverty rates above 25%, with Chuquisaca being the most affected at 53.3%. Unemployment rates were also high, reaching 11.8% in Chuquisaca and 10.5% in Cochabamba. Moreover, Cochabamba stood out for having only 48% of households connected to the drinking water network.

The prolonged drought in Bolivia had devastating effects on agriculture and livestock, leading to significant crop losses and a reduction in food production. The most impacted departments, such as La Paz and Cochabamba, experienced drastic reductions in cultivated areas and livestock, exacerbating food insecurity and driving up the prices of basic goods. Furthermore, the shortage of drinking water increased the risk of diseases and social tensions over access to water resources. Vulnerable communities, including children and the elderly, faced rising malnutrition rates and were forced to migrate in search of better living conditions, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and vulnerability in the context of climate change.

Toward the end of the operation's implementation, Bolivia began experiencing the effects of excessive rainfall and unprecedented floods in departments such as Pando, Beni, Potosí, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz. This created complex scenarios, with areas affected by extreme droughts coexisting with others impacted by heavy rains and floods.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. El Niño in Bolivia. Source: South American Drought Information System	https://sissa.crc-sas.org/blog/2024/05/14/el-nino-en-bolivia-un-fenomeno-cada-vez-mas-impredecible/

2. Bolivia: The hottest winter on record ends in drought across more than half the country. Source: Save the Children	https://lac.savethechildren.net/es/bolivia-el-invierno-m%C3%A1s-caluroso-registrado-termina-en-sequ%C3%ADa-para-m%C3%A1s-de-la-mitad-del-pa%C3%ADs
3. Bolivia: The challenge of accessing drinking water amidst droughts and floods. Source: IFRC	https://www.ifrc.org/es/article/bolivia-el-reto-acceder-agua-potable-entre-sequias-e-inundaciones#:~:text=Sequ%C3%ADas%20prolongadas,el%20fen%C3%B3meno%20de%20El%20Ni%C3%B1o.
4. Bolivia: 105 municipalities across seven departments declared disaster due to drought. Source: Mongabay	https://es.mongabay.com/2023/10/bolivia-municipios-se-han-declarado-en-desastre-por-sequia/
5. A severe drought hits Bolivia: “My biggest fear is running out of food and water”. Source: El País	https://elpais.com/america-futura/2023-10-18/una-fuerte-sequia-golpea-a-bolivia-mi-mayor-miedo-es-quedarme-sin-comida-y-agua.html
6. Bolivia Drought Monitor. Source: SENAMHI	https://monitorsequias.senamhi.gob.bo/#/home
7. Bolivia reports 144 municipalities affected by drought, only Oruro declared disaster. Source: La Razón	https://www.la-razon.com/sociedad/2023/10/16/bolivia-reporta-144-municipios-afectados-por-la-sequia-solo-oruro-se-declaro-en-desastre/
8. Adverse natural events report. Source: National Institute of Statistics (INE) Bolivia	https://www.ine.gob.bo/index.php/medio-ambiente/eventos-adversos-de-origen-natural-introduccion/
9. Drought report. Source: Vice Ministry of Civil Defense	http://defensacivil.gob.bo/web/uploads/images/doc_20230531_144253.pdf
10. Increase in food basket product prices. Source: INE Bolivia	https://www.ine.gob.bo/index.php/incremento-de-precio-de-algunos-productos-de-la-canasta-familiar-se-debe-a-tres-factores/

National Society Actions

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

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	The IFRC CCD Andean Countries supported the National Society in its response to the drought emergency in the country. Key activities included regular monitoring of the situation and assistance in designing the response strategy. Additionally, through the IFRC Americas Regional Office, technical support was provided for this DREF operation. Regarding lessons learned collection, the CCD facilitated community focus groups, and the execution of a Lessons Learned Workshop. These activities allowed the National

	Society to learn from previous experiences and apply continuous improvements, highlighting the commitment to project quality. Moreover, the IFRC submitted a proposal to the ECHO call for proposals within its Humanitarian Implementation Plan, aiming to support medium- and long-term recovery activities in affected communities. Coordination was conducted with the IFRC Climate Centre and the German Red Cross to explore various support opportunities for designing Early Action Protocols. Regarding financial and procurement support, assistance was provided through experts who facilitated procurement processes and offered training to involved personnel. This strengthened the National Society's internal capacities in financial management, ensuring transparency in the use of funds allocated to drought response. During the first three months of the operation, two members of the Rapid Response Personnel (an Operations Manager and a Livelihoods Coordinator) were deployed for a period of two months (November to January). These deployments were crucial to strengthen the National Society's operation, resulting in an increased capacity to plan, implement, and evaluate complex humanitarian projects such as the 2023 Drought DREF.
Participating National Societies	The Swiss Red Cross continues to support the Bolivian Red Cross by strengthening its institutional policies on disaster risk management and health, contributing significantly to the emergency response.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is present in the country; however, it did not actively participate in this DREF Operation.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	In November 2022, the National Government of Bolivia launched the Multinational Immediate Response Plan for Drought, through which it assisted 53 municipalities across eight departments. This plan included the delivery of tanks, rental of water trucks, construction of infrastructure, as well as the provision of water for consumption and irrigation, and the supply of agricultural inputs. These actions were part of the 838 projects planned for water, sanitation, irrigation, and watershed management for the current period. National and local authorities also supported Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) reports in the affected municipalities. According to the latest report from the General Directorate for Prevention and Risks (DGPR), by December 2023, the Bolivian government had assisted 55,426 families in 137 municipalities, through the delivery of 813 tons of humanitarian assistance and an investment exceeding 7.8 million Bs (approximately USD 1,097,632 / CHF 1,003,867). During the first quarter, the National Government continued to provide humanitarian assistance to 9,923 people in 50 municipalities, through the delivery of 231 tons of humanitarian aid. The Government of Santa Cruz allocated over 5 million Bs (approximately USD 703,610 / CHF 643,504) to mitigate the effects of the drought, including the acquisition of 21 water trucks, nine vans, 100 candle filters, 240,000 water purification tablets, and 30 geo-tanks of 20,000 liters, distributed among the most affected municipalities. Meanwhile, the central government promoted the rehabilitation and drilling of 200 wells in Oruro, Cochabamba, and La Paz. The National Government allocated approximately USD 17

	million to address the drought, implementing around 800 water, sanitation, and irrigation projects, as well as emergency programs to deliver 1,200 and 5,000-liter tanks to municipalities affected by the drought.
UN or other actors	The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) continued developing a work plan to intervene in droughts generated by the El Niño phenomenon. In February 2024, the HCT took decisive measures to address the dual challenges facing the country: droughts and floods. The HCT agreed to develop response plans through thematic groups and technical tables, focusing on both drought and post-fire recovery. Additionally, the HCT worked closely with the Vice Ministry of Civil Defense (VIDECI) to coordinate emergency response efforts for floods at the national level. This collaboration included providing critical support to affected communities, where the World Food Programme facilitated cash assistance, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) contributed technical expertise, among other partners. Despite these efforts, the completion of the work plan to address droughts was not achieved due to the emergence of new emergencies, specifically floods.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Humanitarian Country Team in Bolivia, led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), deployed joint efforts with various UN agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as with non-governmental organizations like World Vision, Save the Children-CAHB, and Practical Solutions. The main goal was to coordinate and facilitate information exchange among humanitarian organizations to ensure an effective and coordinated emergency response.

Within this coordination framework, the Bolivian Red Cross played a crucial role as co-lead, actively participating in strategic planning, decision-making, and implementation of actions to guarantee a comprehensive and effective humanitarian response in emergency situations in the country.

Additionally, the Bolivian Red Cross worked closely with national initiatives, such as the Ministry of Education, through the Technical Committee for Risk Management (MEGERI). This committee facilitates the coordination and management of risks in the educational sector, ensuring that emergency responses in schools are appropriate and effective.

The National Society also participated in the Water Sector Technical Table, invited by the Ministry of Environment and Water. This table aims to address challenges related to water management in emergency contexts, ensuring the planning and execution of measures that guarantee safe and sustainable access to drinking water for affected communities.

The Bolivian Red Cross effectively coordinated with the HCT and the Water Boards to prevent duplication of efforts in the planned drought response actions. These collaborations aimed to promote complementarity in aid delivery. However, as the implementation period progressed and the operation neared its conclusion, new priorities emerged due to flooding. As a result, only the Bolivian Red Cross, alongside the Government, successfully carried out concrete actions addressing the drought.

Needs (Gaps) Identified

Livelihoods And Basic Needs

According to the National Drought Impact Report published by VIDECI on 20 March, more than 134,790 hectares of crops were affected, preventing the completion of the sowing season scheduled for July, August, and September. The main crops impacted included potatoes, corn, chili peppers, legumes, grains, fruits, vegetables, and forage for animal consumption.

The El Niño phenomenon in Bolivia has become increasingly unpredictable. The National Meteorology and Hydrology Service (SENAMHI) warned that the temperature anomalies and rainfall during the first quarter of 2024 were insufficient to alleviate the drought conditions of previous years. Although it was expected that this phenomenon would bring abundant rains to some southern South American regions, the situation in Bolivia was more complex, with elevated temperatures exceeding historical maximums and positive temperature anomalies.

The lack of rain caused extreme concern among agricultural producers, prolonged problems from the previous season, and significantly

affected sowing and agricultural production in the region. The instability of food security worsened, affecting not only producers but also local communities that depended on agriculture as their main source of food and employment.

It became imperative to implement local measures to mitigate the negative impacts of drought on agriculture and protect food security. These measures included providing support to farmers, access to efficient irrigation technologies, training in climate-smart agricultural practices, and promoting crop diversification.

An assessment conducted by the Bolivian Red Cross, surveying 1,302 families in 20 prioritized communities, highlighted the strong dependence on agriculture in departments such as Chuquisaca (90.23%), La Paz (93.41%), and Santa Cruz (75.89%). Economic vulnerability was evident, as 70% of the surveyed families reported monthly earnings between 0 and 1,000 Bolivianos (Bs), well below the national minimum wage.

The assessment also revealed that crop losses affected 69% of the families, with more severe situations in La Paz (90%) and Santa Cruz (85%). 93% of the families reported increases in food costs, and the availability of products in local markets was also affected, with 31% of families struggling to meet their basic needs.

Health

The prolonged drought in Bolivia generated multiple adverse impacts, exacerbated by high temperatures and the use of contaminated water, especially among children under nine years old. As a direct consequence, there was a significant increase in diarrheal infections, leading to a worrying rise in the incidence of anemia and malnutrition, particularly among children under five. The Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) Study confirmed this scenario, highlighting the department of Oruro as one of the most affected areas.

In addition to the nutritional health impacts, the lack of rainfall forced the population to store water in containers, creating an environment conducive to the proliferation of vectors, such as mosquitoes that transmit dengue. This situation was particularly alarming in the departments of Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, and northern La Paz, leading to a concerning increase in reported dengue cases in the country. Between epidemiological weeks (EW) 1 and 24 of 2024, corresponding to the period between 1 January and 16 June, a total of 10,141,300 suspected dengue cases were reported, representing an accumulated incidence of 1,074 cases per 100,000 inhabitants.

This figure represented an increase of 232% compared to the same period in 2023 and 421% compared to the average of the last five years. According to reports from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), published on 5 July 2024, the departments of La Paz, Santa Cruz, and Cochabamba were the most affected, reporting the highest number of dengue cases during this period. This concentration of cases highlighted the urgency of implementing preventive and control measures in these areas to contain the virus's spread and protect public health.

The Bolivian Red Cross, through its Health Department, monitored the incidence's progression and worked to address these growing health needs.

Sources:
1. Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Epidemiological Alert on the increase in dengue cases in the Americas: https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/2024-feb-16-phe-alerta-dengue-es.pdf
2. Epidemiological Situation of Dengue in the Americas. Updated report on the incidence of dengue in the region: https://ais.paho.org/ArboPortal/AME_DENG_Situation_Report_SP_2024.asp?env=pri

Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Access to water in various regions of Bolivia was severely compromised by factors related to water scarcity and problems in localized supply systems, especially in the regions of La Paz and Oruro. In these areas, water supply largely depended on "vijigas," which are natural or artificial depressions used as reservoirs. However, the lack of sufficient rainfall resulted in an inadequate flow into these reservoirs, generating insufficient storage capacity to meet the needs of local communities.

In the regions of Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, and Chuquisaca, water supply came mainly from springs and natural water sources. Nevertheless, the decrease in rainfall led to a reduction in the flow of these sources. Furthermore, an increase in suspended sediment was observed in the water bodies, further complicating water extraction and treatment for human consumption.

These problems had direct consequences on the availability and quality of drinking water, exacerbating the water crisis and affecting water security and public health among residents. The lack of adequate storage and the decrease of natural water sources negatively impacted communities' ability to access clean water.

Moreover, home storage was inefficient, as many containers did not have lids and were often used for other activities, compromising the quality of the stored water. To address these deficiencies, jerry cans for transporting and storing water were distributed.

According to Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) reports, as well as focus groups and satisfaction surveys conducted at the end of the project, the needs in the WASH sector remained significant even after the DREF operation. The main demands included improvements to water supply systems, requests for tanker trucks, a pipeline distribution system, and support for well construction.

Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Regarding climate adaptation and risk reduction in Bolivia, two main issues were identified: heatwaves and severe droughts, which triggered an increase in the frequency of forest fires. Extreme temperatures, exceeding 43°C in 2023, caused rapid dehydration, resulting in the death of 10 people and various illnesses, such as severe headaches, skin problems, and heat strokes. On the other hand, prolonged droughts increased the frequency and intensity of forest fires, threatening biodiversity and surrounding communities.

Community Engagement And Accountability

During the assessment phase, several key needs were identified concerning communication within communities. Although almost 100% of families participated in periodic meetings with their community leaders, some residents were unable to stay informed about the latest events. This situation was worsened by limited access to communication media, such as television channels, whose signals were irregular or nonexistent in many communities due to the lack of adequate technological equipment.

Most community members depended on local radios, social networks, and mobile phones, using the latter only when coverage was available, often relying on their community leaders to relay information. Additionally, many communities spoke native languages such as Quechua, Aymara, or Guarani, which required communication and outreach materials to be translated and culturally adapted to ensure understanding of vital information.

Lastly, the need to establish a specific and accessible communication channel became evident, maintaining a close connection with people in these rural areas, far from capital cities, to allow the dissemination of urgent messages and general interest information.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this Operation DREF, the Bolivian Red Cross aimed to provide humanitarian assistance to 1,250 families (approximately 5,000 people) affected by droughts in the departments of La Paz, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Chuquisaca, and Oruro, through the implementation of activities in the areas of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Livelihoods and Multi-purpose Cash.

By the end of the operation, the Bolivian Red Cross successfully assisted 4,984 people in the prioritized areas.

Operation strategy rationale

A. MULTISECTORIAL ASSESSMENT

Between December and January, the Bolivian Red Cross, through its five departmental branches, conducted a multisectoral assessment to identify specific community needs related to livelihoods, access to water, and preferred modalities for Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA). Operationally, each branch formed evaluation teams composed of eight volunteers to carry out the assessments.

Based on the results of this initial assessment, the operational strategy was updated to reach 20 communities prioritized for intervention. These communities were:

- La Paz: Three communities in the municipalities of Sapahaqui, Santiago de Callapa, and Waldo Ballivián.
- Santa Cruz: Six communities in the municipalities of Lagunillas and Gutiérrez.
- Cochabamba: Four communities in the municipalities of Cercado, Tiquipaya, and Villa Tunari.
- Oruro: Three communities in the municipalities of Turco, Poopó, and Yunguyo Litoral.

- Chuquisaca: Four communities in the municipality of Tarvita.

The selection was made in collaboration with local authorities and partners from the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), identifying areas with the greatest gaps in humanitarian assistance, considering existing humanitarian assistance programs.

The Bolivian Red Cross, committed to supporting the population affected by the drought, provided humanitarian assistance through various areas of intervention, as detailed below:

B. LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

The operational update incorporated a strategic focus on livelihoods, specifically centered on the recovery of soils affected by drought. The drought altered the balance of microbial communities in the soil, causing its biological degradation. This resulted in lower crop yields and quality, as well as a decrease in soil functions such as nutrient storage, water retention, and climate regulation.

Soil microbial communities are key to maintaining balance, regulating between 80% and 90% of essential soil processes, and influencing its structure and fertility. Based on this evidence, the updated approach adopted bioremediation using microorganisms to sustainably and efficiently improve soil quality.

A bioproduct with coadjuvant microorganisms (EMI-1) was delivered, designed to optimize sowing and harvesting, accelerate soil recovery, and strengthen plant growth. As a result, higher yields and better quality agricultural production were achieved. Additionally, its use was expanded to water disinfection, as detailed in the next section.

This approach responded to the preferences of the Bolivian population. Although there is resistance to the use of chemical or genetically modified products, the community expressed acceptance and familiarity with this solution based on microorganisms, considering it a non-toxic alternative.

C. WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

This emergency operation prioritized improving access to safe water for 1,250 families (approximately 5,000 people) affected by drought. Field assessments conducted by the Bolivian Red Cross revealed a critical need to strengthen water storage capacities and promote safe water practices within communities. To address these needs, the following strategies were implemented:

1. Improved Water Storage for Communities:

One of the identified needs was the irregular water supply in the most affected communities. To address this challenge and improve water logistics, the operation provided 5,000-liter water storage tanks in nine out of 20 communities with the greatest difficulties in water storage. This reduced the frequency of water deliveries by Departmental Governments and strengthened community resilience to future shortages. Additionally, to prevent the use of unsafe water for consumption, the Bolivian Red Cross distributed two 10-liter jerry cans for water storage to each of the assisted families.

2. Safe Water Practices and Health Promotion:

Along with the delivery of supplies, informative workshops were provided to the community by Bolivian Red Cross volunteers, covering the following topics:

- Water and Health: These sessions highlighted the importance of consuming safe water to reduce malnutrition and prevent infectious diseases. The main waterborne diseases, preventive measures, and basic treatment options were addressed.

- Correct Use of Microorganisms (MI-1) for Water Disinfection: This workshop replaced the previous focus centered on the use of sodium hypochlorite, responding to its low cultural acceptance. Participants learned how to use MI-1 to improve water quality.

D. Multipurpose Cash Assistance (CVA)

While water remained the main concern in affected communities, access to food emerged as a significant secondary need. The Bolivian Red Cross's multisectoral analysis revealed that 93% of families were facing increases in the cost of basic foodstuffs, and 70% faced higher costs for agricultural inputs.

Given the widespread impact of the drought and the precarious living conditions of families, the operation expanded its scope. The number of families assisted increased from 550 to 1,250, all of whom had suffered total or partial loss of livelihoods.

To determine the distribution amount (570 Bs. / 74 CHF), the program considered the average cost of acquiring essential inputs for livelihood recovery (seeds: 450 Bs., fertilizer: 500 Bs.), along with transportation expenses.

Two distribution modalities were established based on the feasibility study:

- Bank Teller Withdrawal (ID Required): This method was applied in 15 prioritized communities. Residents presented identification documents to receive cash assistance.
- Cash-in-Hand Envelopes: This method was used in the remaining five communities, due to the extensive distances to the nearest bank. Cash was delivered house-to-house, in sealed envelopes and with appropriate security measures.

The study identified several factors influencing the choice of distribution methods:

- Limited Experience with Cards/Vouchers: Residents of rural communities mostly lacked experience using debit cards or vouchers.
- Infrastructure Challenges: Rural areas lacked the necessary infrastructure for voucher redemption (e.g., limited access to designated stores).
- Immediate Access to Resources: Cash allowed immediate access to essential resources in areas with distance and connectivity limitations, avoiding delays associated with voucher redemption or waiting for physical goods.

The cash transfer program worked alongside the livelihoods recovery strategy, which used soil bioremediation products to further support agricultural recovery efforts. To assess the effectiveness of both programs, a post-distribution survey was conducted to analyze the use of cash assistance and satisfaction with the soil bioremediation products.

E. DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

This operation expanded its focus beyond immediate relief by incorporating workshops that empowered communities to manage future challenges.

- Community Workshops on Risk Reduction Measures: These workshops equipped residents with knowledge and skills to identify and mitigate various risks associated with droughts and other potential threats.
- Sustainable Agriculture Techniques: Building on the success of soil bioremediation, the workshops explored additional sustainable techniques such as solar irrigation. This helped communities adapt to changing environmental circumstances and build long-term resilience.

F. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA)

The targeted communities, mainly located in rural areas, depend on a well-established leadership structure. These trusted leaders, with titles such as Caciques, Apus, Mallkus, and Mburuvicha (depending on the region and tradition), play a crucial role in community life. Therefore, before starting the intervention, meetings were held with community leaders and local authorities to introduce the team and volunteers, and to explain the operational strategy, fostering trust and appropriate entry into communities. Through these coordination spaces, the most affected communities and special cases for prioritization were also determined.

As feedback mechanisms to gather information from communities, a dedicated WhatsApp hotline was set up and remained constantly available, offering people the opportunity to send their concerns and suggestions. Additionally, at the end of the cash distribution, a survey was conducted to understand how the money helped the assisted population and to collect recommendations.

The CEA approach was incorporated throughout the operation to ensure the proper participation of communities in the process. The main operational activities in this area were linked to community communication and included:

- Production and radio broadcast of micro-spots on water care, fire prevention, and other preventive measures, adapted to native languages and local contexts.
- Design of materials with key messages and dissemination through institutional social networks and printed materials distributed to the population. Printed messages were also delivered to those receiving CVA to provide additional information about the cash assistance process.
- Installation of banners with key messages in strategic gathering points, coordinated with public institutions. This activity had been previously tested in the National Society's COVID-19 projects, achieving good results.

G. SUSTAINABILITY

The prioritized branches continued to monitor the communities and supported the Departmental Governments in providing additional assistance after the operation. The IFRC shared regular situation reports with key stakeholders, such as Movement partners in the country, to obtain additional support for long-term initiatives. The operation strengthened partnerships with government authorities, laying the groundwork for drafting future Early Action Protocols (EAPs) and Forecast-based Financing (FbF) mechanisms that could rely on anticipatory actions for future droughts in the country.

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

During the implementation of the drought response operation in Bolivia, a prioritization strategy was adopted to assist the most affected communities in the departments of La Paz, Oruro, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, and Santa Cruz. This selection considered vulnerability conditions, the logistical capacities of the National Society and coordination with the HCT, ensuring an effective response and avoiding duplication. The prioritized locations and selection criteria were:

1. Santa Cruz

- Municipality of Lagunillas: 48 families were assisted due to the high level of drought impact and their proximity to the Camiri Municipal Branch of the Red Cross.
- Municipality of Gutiérrez: 202 families received prioritized assistance due to significant impact and strategic proximity to the Camiri Branch.

Both locations were severely affected by the lack of rain, impacting crops, food security, and access to water, aggravated by the spread of diseases.

2. La Paz

- Pacajes Province: 250 families were prioritized in communities such as Sapahaqui, Waldo Ballivián, and Santiago de Callapa, where the drought had significantly impacted agriculture and the local economy.

3. Chuquisaca

- Municipality of Tarvita: 250 families were selected as it was one of the most affected areas, with crop losses close to 100% and limited access to water, severely affecting livelihoods.

4. Cochabamba

- Municipality of Cercado: 250 families were prioritized, especially in the community of Tunti Rancho, where agriculture is the main economic activity and was severely impacted by droughts and heatwaves.

5. Oruro

- Municipalities of Yunguyo, Poopó, and Turco: 250 families were assisted in each municipality, selected for their high level of drought impact. In Turco, high temperatures affected the health of camelids, turning the area into a “llama cemetery.”

The prioritization strategy was based on thorough assessments, considering the severity of drought impacts and the communities' capacity to cope with these crises. Criteria evaluated included water availability, crop losses, food security, health impacts, existing infrastructure, and community organizational capacity. This ensured that humanitarian aid reached the most vulnerable and needy localities, aiming not only to respond to immediate emergencies but also to strengthen the resilience of communities in the long term.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The prioritization of families affected by droughts was based on strategic criteria and humanitarian principles to ensure that aid reached the most vulnerable populations. The criteria for selecting families to be assisted were as follows:

- Level of Impact: The degree of impact on families was analyzed, with a focus on crop losses, limited access to potable water, and the ability of communities to cope with climate crises. Priority was given to families that had lost between 80% and 100% of their crops, increasing their vulnerability and risk of migration.

- Focus on Vulnerable Groups: Special attention was given to the most vulnerable groups, including pregnant women, single-parent families, children under five, the elderly, people with disabilities, and others with protection needs.

- Loss of Livelihoods: Families dependent on subsistence farming and experiencing total or partial crop loss were prioritized. This severely affected their ability to meet basic and food security needs.
Socioeconomic Conditions: Families with monthly incomes equal to or below the minimum wage were included in the prioritization, as well as those facing rising prices of essential goods and agricultural inputs.

- Community Identification and Coordination: The identification of affected families was conducted in close collaboration with community leaders and local authorities, who provided initial lists of potentially affected families. These lists were validated through field visits and interviews conducted by Bolivian Red Cross volunteers and staff.
Priority to Rural Communities: Special attention was given to rural communities, which faced significant challenges in accessing water resources due to geographic isolation and limited infrastructure.

Total Targeted Population

Women	1,998	Rural	70%
Girls (under 18)	517	Urban	30%
Men	1,981	People with disabilities (estimated)	1%
Boys (under 18)	504		
Total targeted population	5,000		

Risk and Security Considerations

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

Risk	Mitigation action
Start of the rainy season nationwide	Travel planning and scheduling were carried out, considering alternative routes and vehicles suitable for the terrain. Local personnel with knowledge of the region accompanied the team.
Change of authorities in communities	A permanent dialogue was maintained with the new authorities, providing information on the project, its objectives and activities. Awareness-raising was carried out on the Action Plan, the Red Cross Mission and its fundamental principles.
Lack of fuel availability	Predictability in the purchase of fuel gallons was ensured, and easily accessible locations for acquiring fuel in containers and/or gallons were verified.
Limited availability of volunteers due to extra activities (work, studies, etc.)	A call was made for volunteers residing near the affected areas, inviting them to collaborate in the operation or closure. The participation of municipal branches to support the scheduled activities was also requested. Additionally, a flexible scheduling system was implemented for volunteers, recognizing that many of them have work or academic obligations. This system included options for traveling to communities during weekends or specific periods, allowing volunteers to contribute to the departmental branch's activities according to their availability.
Not all volunteers had mobile equipment to carry out data collection for the survey in KoboCollect.	Mobile phones were purchased to download the KoboCollect tool and conduct initial assessments. These devices were also used for administering satisfaction surveys upon the completion of the operation.
Delays in the purchase of certain items	The National Society assigned procurement responsibilities to a purchasing agent focused on the DREF Droughts operation, and the corresponding processes were carried out transparently. The National Society also worked closely with community leaders to

	inform them about the challenges and potential delays during the operation.
Social protests could restrict access for staff and volunteers, hindering timely assistance	Regular monitoring of security conditions was carried out throughout the operation, and the principles of the International Red Cross Movement related to humanitarian assistance were shared with public authorities and social leaders in the affected areas. Clear and effective communication channels were established between the project team, the community, coordinators, volunteers, and local authorities. This strategy facilitated the swift coordination of actions, the transmission of security-related information, and decision-making based on updated conditions.
Prolonged exposure to the sun and high temperatures	The volunteers were provided with personal protective equipment, which consisted of a backpack, sunscreen, water bottles, a long-sleeved shirt and a hat.
Difficult-to-access roads and long distances to communities	The analysis of the roads on each of the routes was carried out and alternative routes were foreseen to reach the site in case of road inoperability.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

During the implementation of the DREF Droughts 2023 project in Bolivia, the security context presented significant challenges that impacted the effectiveness of humanitarian activities. Despite these difficulties, the operation was successfully carried out thanks to continuous adaptations.

One of the main challenges was the presence of social protests and civil tensions in several regions of the country. Although these events did not disrupt logistical operations or pose a risk to personnel safety, a constant monitoring system of the political and social situation was established. This allowed the management team to anticipate and respond proactively, adjusting operations and coordinating with local authorities.

The safety of humanitarian personnel was a priority. Security protocols were implemented, including risk management training and the provision of personal protective equipment. Additionally, contacts were established with local actors and community leaders to ensure safe access to affected areas and strengthen collaboration with local communities.

Bolivia also faced geographical and climatic challenges that complicated logistics and aid distribution, especially in remote areas. Plans were developed that included alternative routes and strategies to address adverse weather conditions, ensuring the timely delivery of assistance to vulnerable families.

Collaboration and coordination with local leaders, government entities, and the International Federation of the Red Cross were essential. Coordination mechanisms and joint planning meetings were established to ensure a coherent and effective humanitarian response, facilitating the exchange of information and resources.

Adaptation and flexibility were crucial to the success of the project. Continuous evaluations were conducted, and operational strategies were adjusted according to the evolving security context and emerging needs of affected communities, maintaining the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions.

Finally, fuel shortages became a significant concern during the final phase of the project. This limitation affected the ability to transport and mobilize equipment and personnel to drought-affected areas; however, the necessary precautions were taken to mitigate this risk.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

Implementation

Livelihoods And Basic Needs

Budget: CHF 56,557
Targeted Persons: 5,000
Assisted Persons: 4,928

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of families reached with livelihood recovery supplies	1,250	1,232

Narrative description of achievements

A total of 1,232 families (comprising approximately 4,928 individuals) received spray backpacks and EM-1 microorganisms, distributed as follows:

• Santa Cruz: 250
• La Paz: 234
• Oruro: 250
• Cochabamba: 250
• Chuquisaca: 248

The assisted families also received training on how to use the Effective Microorganisms Kit (EM-1), an innovative technology designed to support soil bioremediation and improve water quality.

Through dedicated workshops, community members, farmers, and local leaders were trained in the application of beneficial microorganisms to restore soil fertility and increase agricultural productivity.

Composting techniques and the use of biofertilizers were also taught, enhancing soil health and reducing reliance on chemical fertilizers, thereby promoting more sustainable and resilient agricultural practices in the face of climate-related challenges.

The intervention under this component led to the following results:

• The distribution of EM-1 enabled families to restore soil fertility, which was essential in preparing for the upcoming planting and harvest season.
• Communities, previously reluctant to use toxic products on their crops and livestock, viewed EM-1 as an acceptable alternative aligned with their values. Its introduction allowed for the recovery of soil using natural microorganisms instead of chemicals, reducing dependency on synthetic fertilizers and encouraging a more sustainable approach.
• The knowledge acquired about EM-1 enabled families to adopt alternative agricultural practices aimed at improving soil quality, reducing the use of chemical inputs, and optimizing crop yields.
• Some families began mixing EM-1 microorganisms into livestock feed after participating in the relevant training sessions, demonstrating their trust in the product and its potential benefits for health and productivity.
• In typically arid areas, such as in the department of La Paz, improved soil performance was observed following the use of microorganisms.

Lessons Learnt

• The distribution of EM-1 promoted sustainable agricultural practices that helped preserve natural resources. The use of microorganism-based solutions contributed to environmental conservation in the context of climate change.

• The spray backpacks were the most valued item by the community, as their use extended beyond the application of EM-1. They also served for spraying crops and large animals (such as camelids), streamlining processes that were previously performed manually and with great effort, thus increasing the efficiency of agricultural and livestock activities.

• The active participation of trained individuals within the community proved essential. Those with a better understanding of the products were able to translate labels and messages for their peers, facilitating the assimilation of information. They also provided support and clarification to those with questions, enhancing the effectiveness of the training and ensuring knowledge was shared in an inclusive manner.

Challenges

• The introduction of the Effective Microorganisms Kit (EM-1) posed a significant challenge, as these products were new to the National Society, volunteers, and the community. During the cascade training sessions, questions arose regarding their use, underscoring the need to continue strengthening the content with support from the Regional Office.

• Despite efforts to promote the use of microorganisms for restoring soil affected by drought, some families chose to store the products until the harvest season, scheduled for August. This decision was based on the perception that the products were of high value, and families recognized their potential to enhance crop yields, opting to reserve their use for a critical moment to maximize benefits.

• Training on the use of the products, which included technical aspects related to agricultural techniques, presented a major challenge due to differences in educational backgrounds and access to learning opportunities among community members. Not all individuals had the same level of training or spoke Spanish, which made it difficult to understand the concepts presented. However, bilingual community members supported the transfer of knowledge.

• The limited shelf life of the microorganisms, due to their biological nature, poses a challenge for their effective application in agriculture. For future interventions, it is crucial to assess their period of viability and determine the optimal timing for distribution to maximize efficiency. Additionally, sufficient time must be allocated to train communities in their use and to conduct controlled trials on real crops, ensuring proper adoption and field performance.•

Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 106,812
Targeted Persons: 5,000
Assisted Persons: 4,820

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of feasibility studies completed	1	1
Number of families receiving Multipurpose CVA	1,250	1,205
Number of community workshops on CVA	12	17

Narrative description of achievements

• A total of 1,205 families were assisted through a one-time multipurpose cash transfer of 570 Bs:

- Santa Cruz: 249
- La Paz: 237
- Oruro: 229
- Cochabamba: 242
- Chuquisaca: 248 (Delivered through hand-to-hand modality)

The reduction of 45 families in the final coverage was due to the migration of part of the affected population as a result of the emergency, which made their location impossible despite multiple attempts. The geographical dispersion of the communities and limited connectivity further complicated traceability and access to these families. Additionally, the participant list was restricted to 1,250 individuals, meaning that reallocating vacant slots would have required a new characterization process in adjacent areas to the selected communities, which was not viable within the established operational framework. As an optimization measure, in subsequent interventions, a registration mechanism with a primary list and a backup list has been adopted, improving flexibility and execution efficiency.

As part of the operation, two cash delivery modalities were implemented to ensure that prioritized families could access funds efficiently. In Chuquisaca, direct cash delivery through a hand-to-hand system was chosen due to the remoteness of financial institutions. This modality allowed the assisted population to receive funds without needing to travel long distances, ensuring immediate and direct access to cash.

Meanwhile, in departments where banking services coverage was more solid, bank transfers through Banco FIE were established as the primary method for money transfers. This option facilitated access to funds, enabling individuals to use them according to their most urgent needs.

Both modalities proved successful, demonstrating the importance of combining cash assistance strategies to adapt to local conditions and effectively support affected families.

Additionally, financial literacy training programs were implemented to strengthen the assisted community's ability to manage their economic assistance sustainably. These programs included educational sessions on how to withdraw funds, manage resources, and effectively use banking services.

• A total of 17 community workshops on Cash Assistance were conducted to train families on receiving and using monetary support:

- Santa Cruz: 5
- La Paz: 3
- Oruro: 3
- Cochabamba: 4
- Chuquisaca: 2

During the post-distribution survey and focus groups conducted to close the operation, the community was consulted about how they used the received funds. Approximately 75% of respondents indicated that they spent the money on purchasing essential food supplies, as droughts had severely affected their primary sources of income: agriculture and livestock. Of these, 84% used the funds exclusively for food purchases, while the remaining 16% allocated the funds for mixed expenses. The 25% of assisted respondents who did not use the money for food spent it on purchasing seeds to restore their crops, buying water, paying off debts, purchasing medicine, and acquiring school supplies, among other needs.

100% of respondents valued the multipurpose cash assistance, highlighting that they received it at a critical moment following the loss of their livelihoods. While they noted that the amount would only cover urgent expenses for one to two months, they emphasized that it was a fundamental resource to address essential needs while working toward recovery. Additionally, they recognized the importance of the selection process, stating that the assistance was directed to the most affected families within each community through a detailed and consensus-based prioritization with the population and its leaders.

Lessons Learnt

• The experience gained during the operation highlighted the importance of considering new methods for delivering monetary assistance, especially in contexts where access to banking services is not feasible.
Through this intervention, two successful cash delivery modalities were implemented for prioritized families: one through a bank and the other via a sealed envelope (hand-to-hand).

Both modalities proved to be effective and demonstrated the feasibility of combining monetary assistance strategies. This flexibility allowed for addressing the specific needs of assisted families, many of whom faced barriers such as distance from banking agents, difficulties accessing these services, or costs associated with travel. Thus, it was reaffirmed that diversifying delivery methods not only enhances the effectiveness of assistance but also minimizes the risk of exclusion for families most in need of support.

Challenges

• The long distances between family homes, the limited presence of financial institutions near the residences of those assisted, the high cost of transportation, and the poor condition of roads were significant obstacles. In the department of Chuquisaca, it was confirmed that the nearest financial institution was more than six hours away by land, which made it difficult to use cards or checks as mechanisms for cash transfers.

• Another major challenge was the high illiteracy rate among the assisted population. This situation complicated the process of withdrawing cash and carrying out transactions at financial institutions, as many people were unfamiliar with the required procedures. To support this activity, volunteers played a key role by assisting individuals in collecting their funds and addressing their questions.

• A particularly important challenge was delivering cash through banking institutions in Bolivia, as only Banco FIE met the necessary requirements. This was the first time the National Society had worked with this bank, and issues arose related to the identification of prioritized individuals. Some women were unable to withdraw their money because the bank had their records under their maiden names, despite a list with correct information having been shared. As a result, some women had to make multiple trips to collect the money, which caused frustration within the community and led to complaints directed at the volunteers supporting the process.

Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 22,490
Targeted Persons: 5,000
Assisted Persons: 4,984

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of communities receiving tanks (5,000- liters) for water storage and distribution	11	11
Number of families receiving supplies for drinking water storage (two 10-liter canister)	1,250	1,246
Community workshops on water care	20	19
Community workshops on diarrhoeal disease and dehydration prevention	20	19

Narrative description of achievements

A. Provision of 5,000-Liter Tanks

11 tanks of 5,000 liters were distributed for water storage, intended to reach 750 families across four departments in Bolivia:

• Oruro: 3 tanks for 250 families
• Cochabamba: 4 tanks for 250 families
• Chuquisaca: 3 tanks for 250 families
• Santa Cruz: 1 tank for the community of Tunita, serving 17 families directly.

Each department received water tanks to supply approximately 250 families, with the allocation based on a needs analysis and the severity of the drought. The number of tanks was determined according to the communities' capacity to manage and maintain them, and they were strategically placed to maximize access.

These tanks provided additional storage, enabling families to access potable water more consistently, especially during periods of drought. This helped reduce the difficulties of collecting and transporting water from distant sources.

Workshops were conducted to educate the community on the proper use and maintenance of the tanks, including cleaning practices and contamination prevention. This approach not only minimized exposure to contaminated water sources, reducing the risk of waterborne diseases, but also fostered community autonomy in managing their resources. The training contributed to the long-term sustainability of the project.

B. Distribution of Water Containers

A total of 2,496 ten-liter water containers were distributed, with two per family, benefiting 1,248 families. The distribution was carried out as follows:
• Santa Cruz: 500
• La Paz: 496 – Two families could not be reached, despite multiple attempts. Four containers were kept in storage for future operations.
• Oruro: 500

• Cochabamba: 500
• Chuquisaca: 500

The distribution of the containers was coordinated with local authorities and community leaders to ensure each family received their allocation efficiently and promptly.

Training was provided to the community on how to use the containers for safe water transportation and storage. This included hygiene practices to prevent water contamination.
Guidelines were given on the care and cleaning of the containers to extend their lifespan and maintain water quality.

C. Trainings

• Santa Cruz: 6 sessions (278 participants)
• La Paz: 4 sessions (252 participants)
• Oruro: 3 sessions (249 participants)
• Cochabamba: 4 sessions (215 participants)
• Chuquisaca: 2 sessions (324 participants)

A total of 1,318 individuals were trained. This number only includes adults (18+), though children and adolescents who were part of prioritized families also attended the sessions.

The training emphasized the importance of handwashing before meals and after using the restroom. In this context, instruction was provided on the proper handling, cooking, and storage of food to prevent contamination. Additionally, the appropriate use of water was explained, including how to store and treat water safely to prevent the proliferation of bacteria and parasites.

Lessons Learnt

• Logistical planning for distribution and coordination with local authorities were essential for effective delivery, especially in remote areas.

• Continuous training on the use and maintenance of water containers was crucial for the community to use the resources effectively. The workshops promoted proper water storage and the handling of clean containers, reducing contamination, though further reinforcement of these concepts was needed. The promotion of hygiene practices, such as frequent handwashing, complemented the deliveries to prevent diarrheal diseases, highlighting the importance of health education.

• The distribution of containers complemented the provision of water storage tanks, improving families' capacity to transport and store water safely. This intervention provided immediate relief to communities affected by the drought, facilitating access to potable water and promoting safe water management. The lessons learned from this experience provided a solid foundation for improving future initiatives in water resource management during emergencies.

Challenges

• It was a challenge to convey messages to the community, as there was variability in knowledge regarding the prevention of diarrheal diseases and the proper use of water. This limited the effectiveness of educational programs and made it difficult for families to apply proper hygiene practices.

• Language barriers complicated communication, especially in communities where a significant portion of the population spoke an indigenous language.

• Although many people requested water in bulk instead of containers, this request could not be fulfilled due to logistical challenges related to procurement and the expected impact. This situation highlighted the importance of adapting strategies to the community's needs and considering their preferences when planning future interventions.

Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Budget: CHF 1,124
Targeted Persons: 210
Assisted Persons: 1,232

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of community workshops on risk reduction measures	12	12

Narrative description of achievements

• Community workshops were held on "Climate-Smart Agricultural Techniques," which included training on efficient solar irrigation systems, where participants learned to design and maintain systems that optimize water use and improve agricultural production under drought conditions.
• To spread the knowledge, Local Coordinators replicated the workshop conducted by the Livelihoods Surge, which covered solar irrigation and the use of efficient microorganisms, emphasizing the importance of environmental and economic sustainability, and providing farmers with practical knowledge to implement these technologies.
• The workshops addressed strategies such as rainwater harvesting and the diversification of drought-resistant crops, promoting the conservation of natural resources and strengthening communities' ability to cope with the impacts of climate change.
• This was the first operation in Latin America to measure its carbon footprint, contributing to greater environmental awareness and responsibility in agricultural practices.

Lessons Learnt

• It was observed that offering practical and easy-to-understand training is key for communities to adapt to climate change and apply sustainable techniques in their agriculture.
• The workshops promoted collaboration and built participants' confidence, which is vital for them to adopt more resilient and sustainable agricultural practices.
• Integrating innovative solutions into the training was crucial for addressing climate challenges and strengthening the capacity of vulnerable communities.
• Measuring the carbon footprint helped the National Society reflect on the actions taken and their environmental impact, highlighting the importance of continuing with approaches that promote sustainability and continuing to implement these practices in future operations.

Challenges

The training sessions introduced new concepts both within the National Society and among volunteers and communities, which raised questions among participants, especially regarding the use of microorganisms for soil recovery and the implementation of solar irrigation systems. Therefore, the need to reinforce this knowledge continuously was identified, with the support of specialized technicians from the Americas Regional Office (ARO), who could provide additional guidance to ensure the correct adoption of the new techniques in the communities.

As with the delivery of microorganisms, technical knowledge was sometimes not fully understood by the participants, as many of them lacked academic education and, in some cases, had difficulties understanding Spanish. For this reason, they relied on the support of neighbors and family members who helped translate and understand the key messages.

Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 7,667
Targeted Persons: 140,000
Assisted Persons: 262,355

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of radio micro spots	5	5

People indirectly reached through messages on prevention measures and good practices	140,000	262,355

Narrative description of achievements

Community participation and accountability were crucial to the success of the operation. As part of this cross-cutting component, focus groups were conducted in Oruro, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz with the support of the PMER Officer and the CEA Officer from the Andean Countries CCD to assess the impact of the operation, gather community feedback, and adjust interventions according to local needs. In Oruro, the focus group took place in the community of Turco; in Cochabamba, it included the communities of Tunti Rancho, Valle del Sol, Higuerani, and Azirumarca; and in Santa Cruz, it was held in the community of Salitral Mi.

Additionally, five radio micro spots were developed and translated into indigenous languages. These were broadcast on local radios with key messages about water conservation and healthy practices.
Thanks to the broadcast of these radio spots, which included key messages on water conservation during drought periods, translated into Quechua, Aymara, and Guaraní, it is estimated that 262,355 people in rural communities with radio access were indirectly reached, spreading crucial information on water management during times of scarcity.

Moreover, banners with relevant messages were designed and placed in high-traffic areas and community meetings. These designs were also shared through the National Society's social media channels, helping to increase community awareness and participation.

The activities were conducted considering the key findings of the multisectoral assessment:

• Although only 37% of the surveyed communities had prior knowledge of the Red Cross, a positive aspect was the high level of trust. An impressive 93% of respondents reported feeling comfortable with Red Cross staff and volunteers. This highlighted the importance of fostering strong personal connections within the communities.
• The assessment revealed a clear preference for community meetings (73%). Leveraging this preference enabled face-to-face interaction, promoting a sense of collaboration and addressing concerns directly. In addition, local radio stations (26%) and WhatsApp (19%) were used for broader dissemination of vital information, being the second and third preferred communication channels for families.

Lessons Learnt

It was observed that people tend to absorb messages better through images rather than words, highlighting the need to use effective visual resources in the dissemination of information.
Additionally, it was confirmed that entering communities through local leaders is crucial for building trust and facilitating the acceptance of messages. Leaders act as valuable intermediaries, helping to build strong relationships and ensuring that information is communicated more effectively, thereby reinforcing community participation in distributions and activities.

Challenges

In communities where languages such as Quechua, Aymara, and Guaraní were spoken, it was necessary to rely on translations by family members during workshops and for the reception of messages, as few volunteers were proficient in these languages.

Additionally, there were limitations in the dissemination of radio messages. Not all community members had access to radios in some areas, and the lack of cellular signal in certain locations prevented the messages from reaching the entire population. For this reason, coordination through local leaders became essential to ensure effective communication and the reach of necessary information.

While radio remains accessible and low-cost, its influence has waned in rural areas, particularly among younger generations who prefer other media, such as social networks and television. This requires complementary strategies to ensure the effectiveness of communication.

Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 11,982
Targeted Persons: 0
Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of monitoring visits carried out	2	2
Number of field visits to support the NS technically	2	4
Number of surge deployments	2	2

Narrative description of achievements

• Surge Deployment: Two Surge specialists were deployed for a period of 2 months: an Operations Manager and a Livelihoods Specialist. The actions carried out by the Surge team included:

- Operations Manager: Led the operation, established the roadmap for its implementation, directed the process, and provided guidance to the coordination team.

- Livelihoods Specialist: Adjusted the strategy by incorporating solar irrigation, the use of microorganisms, and carbon footprint measurement, as well as including a livelihoods kit to strengthen the economic recovery of the communities.

• Regional Office Technical Visits: These visits included the participation of the Regional Communications Officer and the Regional CVA Technician, who accompanied the cash distribution in Chuquisaca.

• Follow-up Visits by the Andean Countries CCD: Visits were made to the National Society to accompany the team in the implementation of the operation. The team included the Logistics Officer, Finance Officer, Field Coordination Officer, and PMER Officer, who provided support in purchasing processes, financial reporting, facilitating the lessons learned workshop, and conducting focus groups with the community.

Lessons Learnt

The specialized technical support through the Surge modality was essential for the operation, as it provided assistance in specific areas where the National Society required backing. In particular, the support from both Surge specialists was crucial in reshaping the operation and facilitating the request for an operational update. This technical intervention not only optimized the implementation of the programs but also strengthened the National Society's ability to adapt to emerging challenges and maximize the impact of its intervention.

Challenges

As the National Society had not implemented a DREF operation since 2018, an adaptation period to new processes, formats, and operational strategies was necessary. This challenge was addressed with the ongoing support of the CCD team, which provided guidance throughout the transition and the necessary orientation to ensure that the National Society could align with current standards and enhance its operational capacity.

National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 70,029
Targeted Persons: 40
Assisted Persons: 55

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of volunteers trained and equipped for the development of rapid needs assessments	40	55

Number of lessons learned workshops conducted	1	1
Number of DREF workshops conducted	1	1
Number of monitoring visits carried out	4	7

Narrative description of achievements

• A total of 55 volunteers were trained and equipped to conduct rapid needs assessments in drought-affected communities. These volunteers received personal protective equipment, including backpacks, sunscreen, hats, long-sleeved shirts, and water storage bottles. They also participated in training sessions on WASH, Livelihoods, and diarrheal disease prevention, as well as an introduction to the operational strategy led by the Coordinators.
• In total, seven monitoring visits were conducted by the Central Headquarters team to intervention areas, covering multiple regions in each visit.
• During the operation, a National Coordinator, five Local Coordinators, and a Financial Assistant were hired to oversee project implementation and ensure proper fund management.
• A DREF Workshop was held with the participation of the Senior Regional DREF Officer for the Americas and the Senior DREF Officer from the Global Office, aiming to strengthen the knowledge of the Headquarters team and volunteers from almost all branches regarding new DREF procedures.
• A Lessons Learned Workshop was conducted, facilitated by the PMER Officer of the Andean Countries CCD, focused on sharing and analyzing lessons learned during the project's implementation and identifying areas for improvement in future interventions.

Lessons Learnt

Among the key points that should not be overlooked in future operations, the following were considered:

• Volunteer participation is crucial for the success of the project. It is essential to have committed volunteers with relevant skills and prior understanding of community and emergency work. Training is critical to ensuring that volunteers can conduct precise and effective assessments; therefore, it is recommended to design programs that combine theory with practice, including simulations and field exercises to prepare volunteers for real situations.
• Providing the necessary equipment and ensuring it is in good condition is imperative, as defective or inadequate equipment can hinder the process and reduce the quality of collected data. Additionally, constant communication and ongoing support are vital for resolving issues and adjusting strategies in the field. Volunteers must feel supported and have access to technical assistance in case of difficulties. Establishing clear communication channels and scheduling regular follow-up sessions is essential.
• Collecting feedback from volunteers after field assessments and assistance is crucial for identifying areas of improvement and refining processes. Implementing a formal process for gathering and analyzing this feedback will allow for adjustments in training, equipment, and operational procedures, thus optimizing future interventions.
• Local conditions can vary significantly, affecting the effectiveness of the operation. Volunteers must be prepared to adapt to different contexts and specific challenges within each community.
• The transition from in-person to virtual workshops presented both challenges and opportunities. While the virtual format allowed for broader participation, it also introduced technical issues and reduced direct interaction, which could impact engagement and focus.

A key factor that supported the operation:

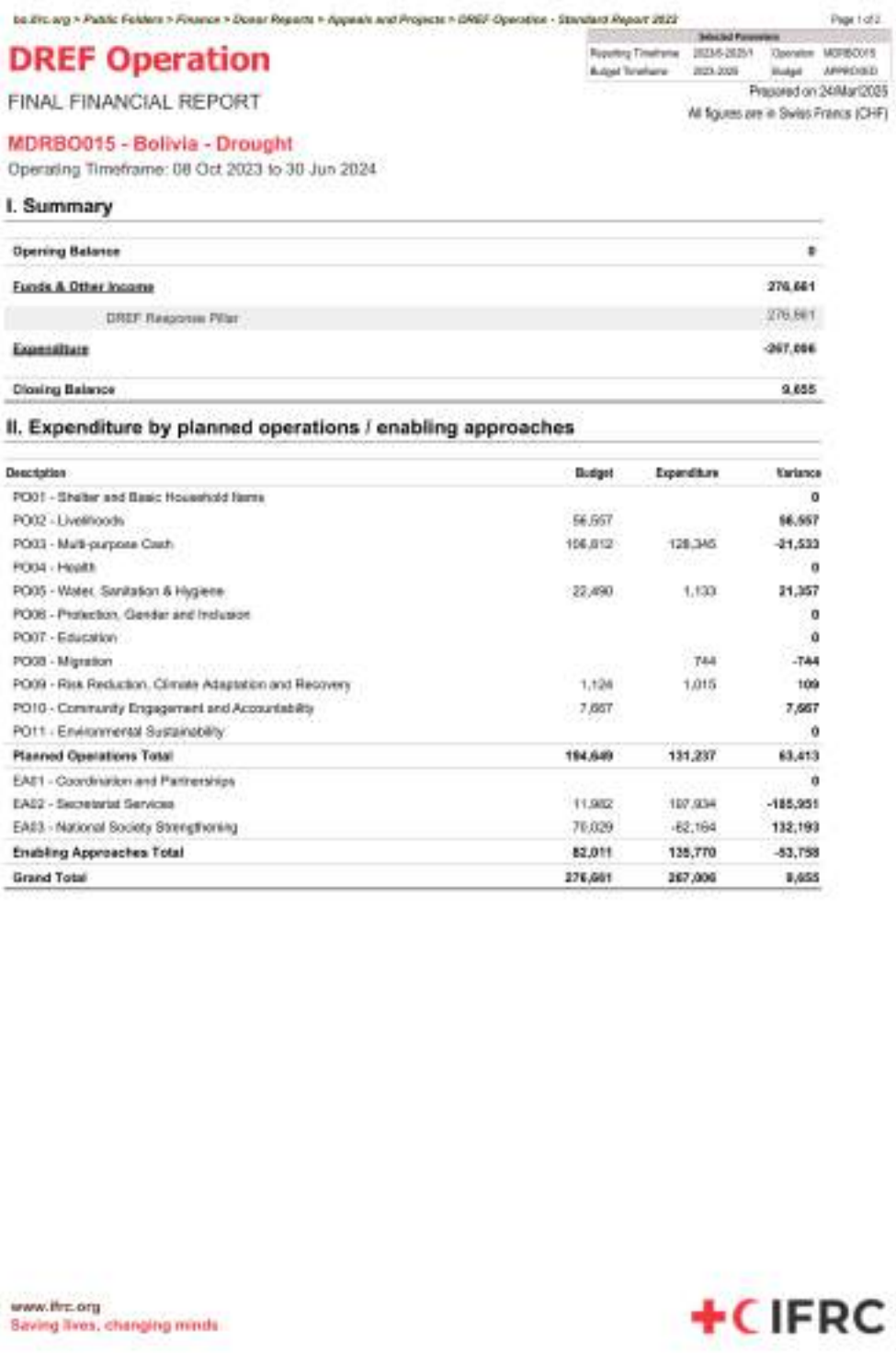
• The purchase of eight mobile phones and a laptop, funded by the portion of DREF funds allocated to technology and equipment, enabled teams to collect real-time data and bridge information gaps in the field. This improved decision-making for the operation and facilitated better management of its implementation from the office. This highlighted the importance of financing equipment acquisition, especially for National Societies with limited resources, where strengthening operations and building long-term capacity for future emergency interventions is essential.

Challenges

• Intensive training of volunteers required careful coordination between time, logistical resources, and content. The combination of theoretical and practical training, along with the need to provide adequate equipment within tight deadlines, was a logistical challenge. To address this, it was critical to plan ahead and ensure that resources were ready before the training sessions.
• Conducting monitoring and accompaniment visits also required detailed logistical planning and effective coordination between teams. Ensuring that visits were timely and productive required the development of a well-structured schedule of visits, which allowed for better coordination of the monitoring team and optimized the effectiveness of each visit.
• The operational experience generated a significant emotional burden for the volunteers. As they stated in the Lessons Learned

Workshop, the difficulties faced during the operation and the needs of the affected families impacted their well-being, so the importance of having spaces for support and emotional discharge in future operations to ensure the mental health of the volunteers was seen.

Financial Report



DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MDRBO015 - Bolivia - Drought

Operating Timeframe: 08 Oct 2023 to 30 Jun 2024

Prepared on 24/Mar/2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	276,661
DREF Response Pillar	276,661
Expenditure	-267,006
Closing Balance	9,655

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods	56,557		56,557
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	106,812	128,345	-21,533
PO04 - Health			0
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	22,490	1,133	21,357
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration		744	-744
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	1,124	1,015	109
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	7,667		7,667
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	**194,649**	**131,237**	**63,413**
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	11,982	197,934	-185,951
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	70,029	-62,164	132,193
Enabling Approaches Total	**82,011**	**135,770**	**-53,758**
Grand Total	**276,661**	**267,006**	**9,655**

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Please explain variances (if any)

A total of CHF 276,661 was allocated from the DREF Fund for the implementation of this DREF operation, of which CHF 267,006 was executed. The remaining balance of CHF 9,655 will be refunded to the Disaster Emergency Response Fund (DREF).

The most significant variation between the budget and actual expenditure was:

During the implementation of the operation, approval was given to cover 60% of the salary of the Communications and CEA Officer for a period of two months, in order to strengthen activities supporting the operation. This allowed additional time to be dedicated to key

tasks such as the development of communication materials, dissemination of relevant information to the affected communities, management of content regarding the activities carried out, and fostering community participation.

Financial Note: Please note that while the total expenditure is accurate, the breakdown by planned operations and enabling approaches may contain approximate figures due to recent updates in IFRC's ERP system.

Contact Information

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