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DREF Operations Update

Uruguay: Drought

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF n° MDRUY003	DREF Operations Update n° 1
Date of issue: 19 June 2018	Operation timeframe: 4 months (extended 1 month to 21 July 2018)
DREF allocated: CHF 83,976	
Total number of people affected: 11,135 people	Number of people to be assisted 160 families (800 people)
Host National Society presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): Uruguayan Red Cross (URC) has 17 local branches in 14 departments in the country with 300 volunteers at the national level.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: National government, departmental authorities, National Emergency System (SINAE), Centre for the Coordination of Departmental Emergencies (CECOCED), Sanitary Works Agency (OSE), departmental governments, National Army, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Health, Fire Brigade and Police.	
With this operations update, this operation will be extended one month to end on 21 July 2018. This no-cost extension is due to the need to complete the monitoring and implementation of the cash transfer programme (CTP). The difficult access issues to the drought-affected populations have led to modifications in the original operation timeline.	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Starting in February, a significant decrease in precipitation led to a reduction of surface and ground water in the centre and north of Uruguay. Government figures indicate more than 11,000 people have been affected by this disaster.

On 28 February, the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) declared the departments of Artigas, Durazno, Paysandú, Rivera, Río Negro, Salto and Tacuarembó in a 90-day state of emergency. As of 13 March 2018, 7 more departments were included (Cerro Largo, Colonia, Flores, Florida, Rocha, Soriano and Treinta y Tres), resulting in 14 of the country's 19 departments under a state of emergency.

The government's declaration of emergency addressed the needs of small-scale cattle farmers and milk producers by permitting cattle to access areas near the routes where water accumulates and loans to purchase animal feed from small and medium producers.



Uruguayan Red Cross (URC) volunteers distributed non-food items for water and hygiene, as well as implemented a cash transfer programme in Picada of Quirino community, Tacuarembó - Uruguay. Source: URC.

Once past the peak of the emergency, the Departmental Intendancy of Tacuarembó continued distributing water to the families and schools affected by the water deficit; some distributions were made at the request of the families.

The Uruguayan National Emergency System requested support from the Uruguayan Red Cross (URC). The URC conducted needs assessments and monitoring visits for the selection of the target population to be reached. During this process, the target communities demonstrated safe water management capacities. The good relationship established with some municipalities enabled the resolution of specific cases of families and / or schools that were without water.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society

The Uruguayan Red Cross began continuous monitoring of the situation at the beginning of the year when meteorological forecasts indicated a future precipitation deficit. The URC actively participated in the online regional meeting detailing the meteorological forecast, held on 12 January, and was involved in the water deficit modelling.

As part of the monitoring of this emergency, the URC has participated in regular coordination meetings with the National Emergency System (SINAE). This agency later requested support with on-site assessments to corroborate information gathered and identify gaps in the government's response.

The URC has focused on the communities most affected by the water deficit with actions in water, sanitation and hygiene promotion and cash transfer programming. In the target locations, the URC:

- Conducted community awareness workshops on safe water management and hygiene promotion
- Distributed 10-litre and 20-litre water buckets (one each) to target households
- Distributed hand washing kits
- Implemented a cash transfer programme.

The National Society's actions were coordinated with other actors involved in the response efforts. This enabled the development of institutional cooperation and intersectoral harmonization for the humanitarian aid provided to the affected population.

With the support of the IFRC's Innovation Department, the Uruguayan Red Cross used the open data kit (ODK) tool for information management related to the registration and selection of beneficiaries.

To augment the humanitarian response capacity of the Uruguayan Red Cross, the National Society has a cooperation agreement with the Argentine Red Cross (ARC) for the deployment its response team members. Within the framework of this agreement, two national intervention team (NIT) members from the ARC were deployed for two weeks, each, to support the coordination and distribution of humanitarian aid.

The URC National Risk Management and Disaster Response director travelled to the departments of Río Negro, Paysandú and Tacuarembó to conduct the assessments and meet with Coordination Centres for Departmental Emergencies (CECOED) in Río Negro and Tacuarembó.

The national authorities have been in continuous contact with the URC, which in turn has maintained communication with the IFRC's country cluster support team (CCST) for the Southern Cone and with the Americas Regional Office (ARO) Disaster and Crisis Department (DCD).

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The IFRC CCST in Buenos Aires provides support to the National Societies of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil. The IFRC Disaster and Crisis Department mobilized a water and sanitation specialist and a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member specialized in water and sanitation to support the URC and SINAE's joint assessments.

The IFRC held an operational and financial induction workshop for the operation team and staff from URC national headquarters.

Overview of non-Red Cross Red Crescent actors in country

The Uruguayan state's SINAE has the responsibility for monitoring emergencies and disasters at the national level. In addition, it coordinates with the CECOEDs at a departmental level. These agencies are responsible for reporting and presenting information on needs and actions implemented during emergencies.

At the departmental level, the CECOEDs, through the Local Emergency Committees, implement actions such as the distribution of safe and clean water, cleaning of water tanks and coordination with local actors such as the Ministry of Health, Army, Police, departmental governments, Department of Development and OSE.

In the affected departments, the CECOEDs have deployed staff and vehicles with water tanks, water pumps and hoses for the distribution of water to community reservoirs, household reservoirs and storage tanks. Since October 2017 until March 2018, a total of 6,780,920 litres of water have been distributed to affected families in the departments of Tacuarembó, Paysandú, Durazno, Florida, Salto, Treinta y Tres, Maldonado, Rivera, Cerro Largo and Colonia.

From the beginning of the emergency, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock has coordinated with other stakeholders and provided animal feed water reservoirs to small-scale cattle farmers and milk producers.

The Scout Movement of Uruguay and the National Emergency System have been accompanying and supporting the implementation of this URC-led operation.

Needs analysis, targeting, scenario planning and risk assessment

LIVELIHOODS

The ongoing drought has affected the livelihood of rural population, particularly small-scale agricultural producers, whose limited production has affected their access and the availability of resources to cover their basic needs.

Due to the lack of water in the reservoirs, animals are consuming faecal-contaminate water leading to illness and at times death. Families do not have the necessary resources to purchase farm supplies, which has affected their ability to earn a living.

Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture oversees the distribution of water for animals and is in the process of improving reservoirs to reduce or prevent faecal contamination. However, assistance has yet to be provided for the sick animals.

The assessment found that the drought has generated different impacts on livelihoods, which range from loss of wages to be able to travel to distant water points; increased need to purchase bottled water; failed investments for well construction; application for loans for the purchase of food ration for production and consumption animals; and difficulties of water access in schools.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Faced with the lack of precipitation, the OSE, with support from CECOEDs and the military, began distributions of safe and clean water by military water tanks. These trucks distribute water to the families in the affected communities. However, the assessments did not identify the analysis process, water management and safe hygiene practices are being implemented.

Suitable household water management and hygiene messages are required for the affected population. Additionally, the population does not have suitable storage to adequately transport and store water. The Uruguayan Red Cross plans to cover this gap by supporting the government's training of communities' officials and representatives. The National Society will also distribute suitable water supplies along with handwashing products and implement awareness raising campaigns about managing safe drinking water and hygiene promotion.

Beneficiary Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to identify beneficiaries of the water and sanitation component of this intervention:

- Families that live in populated areas.
- Families that have access to safe drinking water distributed by CECOED.
- Vulnerable and single-parent families or female-headed households.
- Families with elderly, children or persons with special needs.

The beneficiaries of the cash transfer programme component will be identified based on the following criteria:

- People living in populated areas most affected by the drought in the department of Tacuarembó.
- People with low socio-economic level.
- People whose livelihoods were affected by the drought.
- Households with the most vulnerable people (elderly, children and persons with special needs).
- Families that have not received similar assistance from other organizations/authorities.

Scenario planning

According to the current scenario in which the government is covering the population's water needs, the Uruguayan Red Cross has been implementing a plan of action aimed at training, monitoring and raising awareness of water management and use of the government-distributed water. This intervention has enabled the Uruguayan Red Cross to complement the government's actions until the drought lessens. Volunteers in the affected URC branches were trained to teach others how to conduct physical and chemical analysis of water and home water management. These volunteers simultaneously train local authorities and the community on these issues to ensure the quality of the water distributed to the population.

In livelihoods, in accordance with the response provided by government agencies and the assessments conducted, the Uruguayan Red Cross implemented an unconditional CTP for families engaged small-scale livestock raising and agriculture.

Operation Risk Assessment

As the period of drought is moving into the winter season, low temperatures (below 0° Celsius) have been recorded in the affected area. This situation has the potential to further affect the livelihoods of the people dedicated to agricultural activities and the health of this population and URC intervention teams.

B. Operational strategy

Overall Operational objective:

Contribute to safeguarding the lives of people affected by drought in the department of Tacuarembó by providing humanitarian assistance to 160 families (800 people) through water distribution, hygiene promotion and a cash transfer programme. In addition, the Uruguayan Red Cross will incorporate gender, protection and inclusion issues into all the implemented actions.

HUMAN RESOURCES

All personnel of the Uruguayan Red Cross that is participating in the response has identification, visibility and security supplies in accordance with the country's security conditions. For the operation, more than 30 URC volunteers and staff were mobilized to support the operation. In addition, the operation coordinator and the financial administrator of the operation already were hired. A RIT member specialized in water and sanitation was mobilized for a month to support the actions.

LOGISTIC AND SUPPLY CHAIN

Purchases of supplies have been made locally following the procurement process of the IFRC. As the URC does not have a subsidiary in Tacuarembó, it has coordinated with the authorities of the CECEOED to support the storage and transport of the supplies to the affected community.

COMMUNICATIONS

The National Society has issued a press release about the actions of the operation, as well as a photographic and video registry to disseminate the actions that it is implementing. Also, the URC has been disseminating its actions through Facebook and its institutional web page.

Necessary mechanisms were established so the communities could have direct communication with the URC. This they can freely discuss their appreciation, satisfaction, complaints, suggestions or concerns about the activities being implemented.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The Uruguayan Red Cross is currently reviewing and updating its administrative and financial procedure. For the implementation of this DREF operation, IFRC administrative and financial procedures will be used. Additionally, the URC's hiring of a person responsible for the administration and financial monitoring of the operation will guarantee the appropriate flow and control of these issues. As mentioned, a financial and operational induction workshop was conducted by the IFRC for the staff of the National Society.

SECURITY

During the implementation of all activities, the Uruguayan Red Cross guaranteed that all volunteers and administrative staff involved in the response received, understood and accepted its security guidelines, including the Safer Access framework.

At the operational level there were no security incidents for the personnel, as the activities were coordinated at the community level and with the local authorities.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

 Water, sanitation and hygiene People targeted: 800 people (160 families) Male: 423 Female: 377		
Outcome 1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water-related diseases in targeted communities		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of families reached with WASH activities	160	84
Output 1.1: Continuous assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene situation is carried out in targeted communities		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained to carry out WASH activities	20	12
# of monitoring visits	4	3
# of coordination meetings	8	7
Progress towards outcomes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid assessment by the IFRC/URC The IFRC mobilized a water and sanitation specialist and a general RIT to support the actions of drought assessment of the National Society team. The evaluation included evaluation missions of the most affected departments in the North where the greatest number of population was affected by the drought. As the affected area does not have a local branch, the National Society is training 11 people to be local volunteers. Monitoring and follow-up by the URC of the drought The Uruguayan Red Cross has made monthly monitoring visits to track operational progress. Coordination meetings with other WASH actors The National Society has held regular meetings with the state's Sanitary Works, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Ministry of Social Development, departmental Administration, departmental Coordinating Centre, Emergency Committee and the National Emergency System. 		
Output 1.2: Daily access to potable water will be provided, which complies with Sphere Project standards and the World Health Organization (WHO) in terms of quantity and quality, for the target population		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of surveys conducted with the affected communities	7	5
% of analysis of the residual chlorine taken from the distribution points	15	14
# of training sessions held on water management in people's homes	5	4
Progress towards outcomes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the use and treatment of water through surveys of homes and water quality tests in homes 		

Tests were carried out in the communities where water was distributed, reaching 4 communities and 3 schools with normal levels. In addition, 10 water wells were tested, determining levels of alkalinity and low level of chlorine. The URC informed the water authority for their management and maintenance.

- **Purchase and distribution of 14 chlorine tests**

Currently, 14 chlorine meters have been purchased which have been used to test water in the following 12 communities of Picada de Quirino, Semper, Rincon de la Laguna, Paso de los Novillos, Casa Cuchilla de Piedra, Cinco Sauses, Carahuata, Batovi, Hachar, Laures, Tambores and San Gregorio.

- **Distribution of 320 10-litre water buckets (two for each family) for the storage of water in their homes (one with a tap and one without)**

For the emergency, two types of water buckets were purchased. The 10-litre water buckets were used to prioritize water for babies and the 20-litre water buckets for storage and transportation. To date, 84 10-litre water buckets and 84 10-litre water buckets have been distributed.

Department	Community	10 Lt	20 Lt
Tacuarembó	Semper	5	5
	Rincon de la Laguna	5	5
	Picada de Quirino	40	40
	Pasos de los Novillos	34	34
Total		84	84

- **Workshop on WASH for volunteers**

The RIT for water and sanitation carried out a water and sanitation workshop for 12 volunteers in the Paysandu branch, the one closest to the emergency zone, and the Operation Coordinator reproduced this training for 10 additional volunteers.

- **6 training session for population from the targeted communities on the storage of potable water and the safe use of water treatment products**

The RIT specialized in WASH. Water training sessions for the community were prepared by the RIT. Through this preparation, Uruguayan Red Cross volunteers held 4 workshops for the affected communities of Tacuarembó.

Department	Community	Families
Tacuarembó	Semper	5
	Rincon de la Laguna	5
	Picada de Quirino	40
	Pasos de los Novillos	34
Total		84

Output 1.3: Hygiene promotion activities, which meet Sphere standards in terms of the identification and use of hygiene items, provided to target population

Indicators:	Target	Actual
160 families that receive key messages	160	84
# of awareness raising sessions conducted	6	4

Progress towards outcomes

- **Rapid Assessment**

This evaluation was carried out to determine the needs of water and hygiene, as well as the determination of vulnerable groups affected by the drought in Tacuarembó.

- **Hygiene promotion activities with the communities**

The hygiene promotion trainings were held in conjunction with the water care workshops for the 84 families. These sessions presented the importance of hand washing and the use of kits.

- **Distribution of products to promote handwashing**

84 hand-washing kits (containing 3 bars of soap and 3 towels) were distributed to affected families in the following communities:

Department	Community	Families reached
Tacuarembó	Semper	5
	Rincon de la Laguna	5
	Picada de Quirino	40
	Pasos de los Novillos	34
Total		84

- **Design and printing of WASH materials**

Instructions for water purification methods have been prepared for the affected population. WASH materials, validated by the National Emergency System and the Ministry of Public Health, are in the process of being distributed to schools.

Challenges and measures taken: The main challenges have been related to water and sanitation due mainly to the distance between communities and homes; the verification of the water quality of the water distributed by water trucks; and well maintenance.



Livelihoods and basic needs

People targeted: 800 people

Male: 423

Female: 377

Outcome 1: Communities, especially in the zones affected by disaster and crisis, restore and strengthen their livelihoods.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of targeted households that have enough cash to meet their immediate needs	160	84

Output 1.5: Households are provided with unconditional/multi-purpose cash grants to address their basic needs

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of beneficiaries that participate in the CTP	160	84

Progress towards outcomes

- **Undertake a feasibility study for CTP**

The feasibility study was incorporated into the assessment conducted the first month of the operation by the Operations Coordinator and IFRC livelihood assistance coordinator. The study identified the humanitarian needs, which included the application options of the cash transfer programme. As mentioned above, the assessment found that the drought has generated different impacts on livelihoods, which range from loss of wages to be able to travel to distant water points; increased need to purchase bottled water; failed investments for well construction; application for loans for the purchase of food ration for production and consumption animals; and difficulties of water access in schools.

- **Distribution of unconditional cash transfers to 160 families that meet the vulnerability criteria**

To date, 84 families affected by the drought have been supported by the unconditional cash transfer programme. This was done through the delivery of checks for 7408 Uruguayan pesos (approximately CHF 266) and in coordination with the local authorities and the national response system.

Department	Community	Families
Tacuarembó	Semper	5
	Rincon de la Laguna	5
	Picada de Quirino	40
	Pasos de los Novillos	34
Total		84

- **Conduct a satisfaction survey on the intervention's impact**

The satisfaction survey is planned to be implemented during the last month of the extension as part of the closing of the operation.

Challenges and measures taken: The population affected by the drought is mainly located in rural areas that have difficulty accessing the clean water network. This population is geographically dispersed in distant areas. The identification and location of affected families has been a challenge. The team that managed the local attention of the municipality was changed and assigned to other tasks. Support has been requested from national and local authorities to complete the identification process.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People targeted: 800 people (160 families)

Male: 423

Female: 377

Outcome 1 - Inclusion and Protection: Communities identify the needs of the most vulnerable groups and those that are particularly discriminated against and marginalized as a consequence of inequality, discrimination and the lack of respect for their human rights and respond to their different needs.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of reports that include gender issues	4	3

Output 1.1 - Inclusion and Protection: The National Society's programmes improve equal access to basic services, considering different needs based on gender and other diversity factors.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of monthly reports that mention the findings of analyses and needs assessments in gender.	4	3

Progress towards outcomes

- **Support provided to sectorial teams so that they include measures in their planning to address specific vulnerabilities involving gender and diversity factors (including persons with special needs)**

With regards to key messages, volunteers were given guidance on supporting female victims of violence and information on state policies regarding domestic violence cases. The URC considered women, men, youths, girls, boys and persons with disabilities during the development of its activity.

- **Support sectorial teams to guarantee the collection and analysis of data broken down by age, sex and disability**

The URC reviewed sample reports for specific National Society activities, which include gender and diversity indicators. The final report will contain these. According to the current information, gathered via ODK, the families reached had the following profile: 25% with young children; 20% with adolescents; 40% adults and 15% elderly. Of these total, 3% have some type of disability.

Challenges and measures taken: This is the first time the National Society has been involved in an emergency response operation that formally includes gender and diversity lines. Although volunteers have received induction

training for this, the sample reports include data collection and analysis for which the URC lacks specific procedures.

Strategies for Implementation

Required (CHF) 58,252

Strengthen National Society

Output S2.1.1: Effective response preparedness and National Society surge capacity mechanism is maintained

Output 1.1 Effective response preparedness and National Society surge capacity mechanism is maintained.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
A final report is created	1	0
# of monitoring visits	10	5
Operational staff is hired	2	2
1 RIT deployed	1	1

Progress towards outcomes

- **Hiring of staff by the National Society**

For the operation, an Operations Coordinator and a financial officer were hired to manage the operation's implementation.

- **Insurance for volunteers**

The Uruguayan Red Cross has activated insurance for 300 volunteers. The National Society has convoked the recruitment of new volunteers in the affected areas and in which no branch exists. Insurance will be extended for this group of approximately 15 new volunteers.

- **Operational support from the National Society**

URC's national headquarters has conducted monitoring missions every month since the operation began. In May and June 2018, the URC president and executive director visited the affected areas to support the field teams' actions.

- **Operational Support from the IFRC**

The IFRC's support has been ongoing throughout the operation through its CCST for the Southern Cone and Brazil, the ARO Disaster and Crisis Department (Livelihoods and Surge), as well as finances.

- **Deployment of a General RIT**

The IFRC deployed a water and sanitation RIT member from the Colombian Red Cross Society for one month.

- **Monitoring visits by the disaster manager for South America**

The IFRC's disaster management coordinator for South America conducted a mission in mid-June to the affected areas to support and guide National Society actions.

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