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Emergency Appeal

Greece: Wildfires

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Appeal n° MDRGR003

7,100 people (2,367 households) to be assisted

Appeal launched 31 July 2018

Glide n° WF-2018-000123-GRC

2 million Swiss francs current Appeal budget

Appeal ends 30 April 2019

This Emergency Appeal seeks a total of some **2 million** Swiss francs on a preliminary basis to enable the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** to support the **Hellenic Red Cross (HRC)** in delivering assistance and support to approximately **7,100 people for nine months**, with a focus on the following programmatic areas: **health; livelihoods and basic needs; protection, gender and inclusion; disaster risk reduction (DRR) and National Society capacity enhancement**. Community engagement and accountability (CEA) and protection elements are included in all areas of interventions. The planned response reflects the current situation and information available at this time of the evolving operation, and details will be made available in the Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA).

The disaster and the Red Cross Red Crescent response to date

23 July 2018: Several wildfires break out in forests and villages across the country, primarily in the areas surrounding the capital, Athens. A state of emergency is declared, and assistance from the EU is requested. The HRC immediately starts to provide first aid services to affected people.

24 July 2018: The HRC's National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) is deployed, together with the Emergency Health Unit, the Emergency Psychosocial-Support Unit and the Mobile Health Unit. 26 persons are found dead close to the seaside by Red Cross Samaritans.

25 July 2018: As the death toll rises, people start responding by donating massive amounts of items in kind such as burn creams, medicines, biscuits, etc. to the HRC and other humanitarian actors.

26 July 2018: The death toll reaches 83 people, and more than 187 persons are reported to be injured, with many in critical condition. The HRC continues to provide first aid and other health-related services, Psychological First Aid, Restoring Family Links (RFL) services as immediate response to the disaster.

31 July 2018: The IFRC issues an Emergency Appeal, based on the request of the HRC, seeking 2 million Swiss francs to support 7,100 people for nine months.



The National Disaster Response Team of the Hellenic Red Cross discusses findings of the initial assessment
Photo: Hellenic Red Cross

The operational strategy

Needs assessment and beneficiary selection

As of 30 July, the death toll has reached 91 people, and more than 187 people have been reported to be injured, with many remaining in critical condition. 700 people have been rescued through the sea by the coast guard and the navy, after being forced to flee to beaches to escape the flames. Residents in the coastal region west of Attica were requested to abandon their homes, and hundreds of people have been evacuated. It is estimated that the total exposed population is 4,118 people.¹ More than three thousand homes and houses have been assessed in both Eastern and Western Attica – with 841 of them being completely destroyed.² This number is expected to increase as the assessments continue. Besides the ongoing damage assessment done by engineers of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation, a joint assessment is currently being considered by the municipality, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Red Cross. Considering the necessity for a more detailed needs assessment, HRC staff is in contact with a variety of stakeholders in the field to receive the latest information on the current situation, including updates on where evacuated people are located.

The HRC has been responding to immediate needs since the fire broke out, but as the fires are being put out and infrastructure is slowly being restored and the needs for recovery are emerging, the HRC is looking to understand how to complement the actions provided by the government.³

Based on the information received from the municipality, and on an initial assessment of the National Disaster Response Team of the HRC, as of now, the needs of people affected include both short-term and long-term recovery. The immediate needs include shelter for the people who have lost their primary residence. As the damaged site is a relatively small geographic area with mostly upper-class holiday homes, insurance policies are in place and support is planned by the government. Community disaster preparedness efforts can prevent similar situations in the future in the area and also elsewhere in Greece – a country that is hit frequently by smaller and larger disasters that require a more proactive approach from communities

This emergency response operation has allowed the HRC to utilise their recently enhanced disaster response mechanism. Starting with a Preparedness for the Response (PER) self-assessment, the National Society has been developing several actions during 2018 to strengthen their emergency coordination and overall operational capacity. The actions include development of emergency response structures, contingency planning, training of emergency response team and other volunteers, and they enable the staff and volunteers to provide better assistance to those in need. This Emergency Appeal operation aims to support the continuous effort of the National Society to increase their readiness and keep strengthening disaster response mechanisms. Furthermore, disaster preparedness training, enhancing the response capacity of branches and a PER post operational analysis will be conducted to monitor the progress and adjust the preparedness for response plan of action.

There is a need for support in health-related issues, especially for people with chronic conditions in need of regular check-ups and continuous treatment. Health problems are related to exposure to the wildfires, such as burns (from minor to severe), respiratory complications due to inhalation of smoke, eye irritation as well as fear and stress. People with acute or chronic health problems include older people reluctant to leave their homes or being unable to do so due to mobility restrictions. One of the most important emergent needs of people is psychosocial support. The loss and damage rate of this fire has made a vast impact on the mental health of the people affected, but also of entire communities where the fire occurred. There is a need for provision of psychological first aid to address the immediate effects of the fire, and the identification of missing people is also a priority. Psychosocial support (PSS) services should include activities by mental health specialists to support the people affected by the fires, their relatives and the broader community.

Coordination and partnerships

The HRC is in constant communication with local authorities and other actors in the field. Meetings with municipalities and NGOs (such as Medecins du Monde and Smile of the Child) are being held to coordinate on the assessment of needs, mapping of the area, and ensuring that complementary services are being provided.

¹ Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) – DG ECHO Daily Map – 26/07/2018. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ECMDM_20180726_Greece_Forest-Fires.pdf

² Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks, <http://www.yme.gr/?aid=6233&tid=21>

³ A new law to compensate the disaster affected people is being passed in the Greek Parliament and it has been reported that the fund has at least 40 million Euro to be paid out to cover losses.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

Since an Emergency Appeal was launched for Greece in 2015 to support the population movement response, HRC has been supported by IFRC, ICRC and several Partner National Societies, out of which the Danish Red Cross and Spanish Red Cross remain in country. HRC has been responding to the wildfire emergency since the early onset, supported by these same partners. The IFRC is providing technical support for the coordination of the emergency, while Spanish Red Cross is supporting the Mobile Health Unit in addressing health-related needs. ICRC continues to provide some technical and financial support to the Tracing Service of the HRC in the effort to help families find their missing relatives. ICRC also provides technical assistance to governmental forensic teams involved in the identification of dead bodies and has donated material equipment (such as personal protective equipment, body tags, and body bags) to forensic medical services.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The government has mobilised emergency resources, including fire service vehicles and firefighters, with aircraft and helicopters contributing to the firefighting efforts. The government announced that support would be provided to address the immediate needs of the affected municipalities and their citizens. Municipalities have coordinated relief assistance on the ground. Several NGOs are present, offering medical, psychological, and in-kind support. HRC is in regular communication with all external actors, to ensure that the response is well coordinated and complimentary to government support.

Proposed areas for Intervention

Overall objective

This operation aims to support the needs of 7,100 people from the most vulnerable communities with immediate and medium-term assistance in a timely, effective, and efficient manner, as well as to help people recover from the impact of the fires and increase their resilience to future emergencies. Additionally, following the severe impact of the fires, the HRC will carry out activities to support vulnerable communities to be better prepared for future disasters, as the recent events (e.g. flash floods on 26 July, only a few days after the fires) have shown the need for an increased focus on preparedness to avoid future tragedies.

The main priority at this time is to understand the full scope of the disaster, therefore, the continuation of thorough assessments is essential. The plan is to have a holistic approach to address the needs, including short-term and long-term needs of people directly and indirectly affected by the fire. This approach also focuses on community-based risk prevention and preparedness to ensure that communities at risk can have more tools to prepare for and cope with future disasters.

The proposed areas of intervention in the short term are health-related – mainly first aid, primary health services and PSS. In the longer term, the operation will focus on recovery and institutional preparedness activities including preparedness for emergency response. PSS will also be provided in the long term, as needed. The focus of operations will be placed on providing those who have been directly or indirectly affected by the fires with cash-based assistance to support their recovery. Additional emphasis will be placed on disaster response preparedness activities.

This Emergency Appeal aims to support 600 affected families with cash assistance, providing multi-purpose cash grants to cover basic needs and recurring costs, to help people recover and reduce the sense of insecurity. An in-depth cash assessment will be carried out, and selection criteria will be developed based on social and economic indicators. It is expected that the longer-term shelter needs will be covered by the government and HRC actions will complement government efforts.

CEA and Protection elements are included across all areas of interventions, however more specific activities are also being designed to address specific needs. In the short term, information materials will be prepared with a detailed description of the services provided by the HRC. Protection services are mainly offered through RFL services, targeting the people in search of missing relatives.

Areas of Focus



Disaster Risk Reduction

People targeted: 4,500

Male: 2,250

Female: 2,250

Requirements (CHF): 59,000

Proposed intervention

Needs analysis and population to be assisted:

Communities affected by the wildfires continue to be exposed to future fire risk conditions, which is mostly due to factors such as dry weather conditions during the summer season, density and type of forest coverage (pines mostly, a highly flammable species when dry), topography and urban setting. Future risks of wildfires highlight the need to ensure that community preparedness and risk reduction measures are implemented alongside relief and recovery interventions. Therefore, community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) activities are necessary to ensure that communities at risk are better prepared to face and reduce the impact of future disasters.

Helping families to be aware of the hazards they are facing, and the potential vulnerabilities that can lead to significant impacts in case of future disasters, will allow them to plan and be more prepared. As part of establishing community resilience to disasters, CBDRR activities will be undertaken by having early warning – early action agents to identify local risks, vulnerabilities and capacities to strengthen resilience of communities.

Planned activities include the following:

- Development/adaptation of training for family disaster plans
- Training in family disaster plans
- Hazard-specific disaster risk reduction public awareness and public education campaign (e.g. social media, printed materials, key messages development)



Livelihoods and basic needs

People targeted: 600 households (approx. 1,800 people)

Male: n/a

Female: n/a

Requirements (CHF): 1,031,000

Proposed intervention

Needs analysis and population to be assisted:

Recent experience shows that Greece is frequently faced with small- to medium-scale disasters such as floods, forest fires and earthquakes. The recent wildfires in East and West Attica have affected thousands of households, resulting in great livelihoods insecurities among affected populations. Loss of lives, destroyed houses and family businesses and loss of livelihoods have created insecurity and post-traumatic stress, which is difficult to overcome.

The programme will target 600 households directly or indirectly affected by the recent disasters in East and West Attica. The total amount to be transferred will be EUR 1,500 in a period of three months, based on an analysis prepared by HRC Cash team. The objective is to assist the selected households with multipurpose cash grants in order to cover basic needs and mitigate the sense of insecurity and its negative effects. The assistance will include persons identified through the Government Social Services, in addition to persons not eligible for government support who face a direct impact to their lives and livelihoods.

The selection of beneficiaries will be based on social and economic criteria determined by the HRC. The HRC Cash team will work closely with the social services of the affected municipalities, and will identify the most vulnerable people based on the agreed criteria. The registration process and the implementation of all relevant activities will be organized and carried out by the HRC Cash team. A help desk will be set up at the respective municipalities to assist people through provision of proper information about the programme, objectives and selection criteria. The help desk will be maintained during the registration and for as long as it is necessary. The HRC will also make available a telephone number to be used as the hotline as information and feedback mechanism.

Furthermore, the programme will create the opportunity for the HRC to use its funding scheme for emergencies to channel funds raised domestically and internationally directly to its beneficiaries.

Planned activities include the following:

- Assessment of the municipalities affected by the recent fires
- Provision of multipurpose cash grants to cover basic needs
- Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM)



Health

People targeted: 400

Male: 200

Female: 200

Requirements (CHF): 107,000

Proposed intervention

Needs analysis and population to be assisted:

Needs for health services include issues related to exposure to the wildfires, such as burns (from minor to severe), respiratory complications due to prolonged exposure to smoke, eye irritation and others. Additionally, another potential need is that some people have lost their means of transportation, which could present a challenge to accessing health services (e.g. for people with chronic illnesses). There is a need to have the presence of mobile medical units that can bring primary health care directly to the affected areas.

Alongside physical medical attention, psychosocial support is one of the main priorities in the short and longer term, this includes those who have been directly affected (e.g. loss of relatives, property and others), but also those not directly affected (e.g. those who witnessed destruction and/or deceased persons, stress due to potential loss of livelihoods because of decreased levels of tourism in the area). To support these people, psychological interventions need to be planned and implemented in a timely matter. Specialised support for dealing with natural disasters and trauma will need to be offered by well-staffed teams.

Planned activities include the following:

- Setting up of HRC First Aid Post in the affected areas and also to act as a base for the mobilisation of Samaritan volunteers around the affected area
- Deployment of a Mobile Health Unit and HRC Emergency Health Unit
- Home visits to disabled people, people with chronic diseases, pregnant women and families with children, based on referrals, including ad-hoc visits per request of the municipality for specific cases
- Providing Emergency PSS to the affected people
- Development/adaptation of training programmes for Community-Based First Aid
- Development/adaptation of training programmes for Community-Based Psychological First Aid
- Trainings on Community based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) and trainings in Community-Based Psychological First Aid in the affected areas



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People targeted: 400 (300 with general protection, 100 with RFL)

Male: 200

Female: 200

Requirements (CHF): 11,000

Proposed intervention

Needs analysis and population to be assisted:

The primary protection concern is the high number of missing people, and people who are trying to find their relatives. People from inside and outside Greece are continually reaching out to report on missing people. RFL is an essential component in the short term. In the long term, there is a need for RFL preparedness activities. In general, specific protection activities will be needed for both the community and the disaster responders to ensure that the different needs of the most vulnerable groups will be considered early on in preparedness and response phase.

Planned activities include the following:

- RFL services in the affected areas which includes searching for missing persons, facilitating communication between separated family members, and advocating authorities on actions to prevent separation. This activity is supported by ICRC.
- Ensure the protection component is included in the Community-Based activities (CBDRR, CBHFA).
- RFL in emergency training as well as RFL preparedness for communities.
- Educational activities and materials in school and centres for elderly on disaster preparedness and regular mass evacuation exercises, during which specific needs will be assessed (i.e. mobility restricted persons).
- Capacity building for all Samaritans, volunteers and branch staff of HRC on Protection issues that arise from emergencies (disaster management protection focus).
- Trainings on Code of Conduct and protection policies for all staff and volunteers in branches.
- RFL outreach activities

Strategies for Implementation

Strengthening National Society Capacity

Requirements (CHF): 619,000

Planned and ongoing activities include the following:

Since the country is hit frequently by smaller and larger disasters, HRC would aim to continue with the efforts to be better prepared and alert communities to disasters by the Disaster Management (DM) department of the National Society, to prevent similar situations in the future in the larger area and nationwide.

Preparedness for Effective Response:

- Development of HRC disaster risk management policy
- Improve Contingency Planning capacities in at least three branches
- Disaster response teams training, equipment and development plan
- Emergency assessment training for volunteers and staff
- RFL preparedness activities – equipment and training for volunteers
- Strengthening of warehouse, provision of emergency response equipment
- Disaster management training for volunteers
- Technical support to the DM department of the HRC and strengthening DM human resources
- Preparedness for effective response post operation capacity assessment and plan of action updated.

National Society Development

- Development of a communication strategies and communication platforms
- Development of organisational frameworks (security, resource mobilisation, communications and others)

Ensure Effective International Disaster Management

Requirements (CHF): 85,000

Planned and ongoing activities include the following:

- IFRC follow up missions for the provision of technical support.
- Community engagement campaigns

Influence Others as Leading Strategic Partners

Requirements (CHF): 21,000

Planned and ongoing activities include the following:

- Operation evaluation and monitoring

Ensure a Strong IFRC

Requirements (CHF): 72,000

Planned and ongoing activities include the following:

- Coordination support

The following programme support functions will be put in place to ensure effective and efficient technical coordination: **human resources, logistics and supply chain; information technology support (IT); communications; security; planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (PMER); partnerships and resource development; and finance and administration.** Details will be made available in the Emergency Plan of Action.

Funding Requirements

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

EMERGENCY APPEAL

MDRGR003 - GREECE - Fires

Funding requirements - summary

Area of Intervention	Needs in CHF
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION	59,000
SHELTER	
LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS	1,031,000
HEALTH	107,000
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE	
INCLUSION, GENDER AND PROTECTION	11,000
MIGRATION	
STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES	619,000
ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTER'L DISASTER MANAGEMENT	85,000
INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS	21,000
ENSURE A STRONG IFRC	72,000
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS	2,005,000

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Elhadj As Sy
Secretary General

Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Information Bulletin No. 1](#)
- [Information Bulletin No. 2](#)
- [IFRC Press Release](#)
- Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

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

In the Hellenic Red Cross

- **Secretary General:** Despina Perimeni, secretary_general@redcross.gr
- **Operational coordination:** Angelica Fanaki, Director of Resource Mobilization & Programs Department, angelica.fanaki@redcross.gr,

In the IFRC

- **IFRC Regional Office for Europe:** Seval Guzelkilinc, DM Coordinator, seval.guzelkilinc@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Country Office:** Ruben Cano, Head of Country Office, ruben.cano@ifrc.org, Sofia Malmqvist, Programme Coordinator, sofia.malmqvist@ifrc.org
- **In Geneva:** Susil Perera, Senior Officer, response and Recovery, susil.perera@ifrc.org

For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:

- Louise Daintrey-Hall, Acting Partnerships and Resource Development Coordinator, IFRC Regional Office for Europe, louise.daintrey@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- Dorottya Patkó, PMER Manager, IFRC Regional Office for Europe, dorottya.patko@ifrc.org

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.