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Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF)

Chile: Wildfires

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRCL008
GLIDE n° [WF-2012-000001-CHL](#)
11 January 2012

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

68,799 Swiss francs have been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Chilean Red Cross (ChRC) in delivering immediate assistance to some 250 families (1,000 persons). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: The Chilean government has issued warnings in the regions of Biobío, Maule, La Araucanía and Magallanes due to the spreading of wildfires. As of 6 January, 254 homes had been destroyed by the fires, leaving 1,082 people homeless.

As the Chilean government continues working to contain the fires and to provide transitional and permanent housing to the affected population, the National Society will assist the affected families with essential relief items, access to safe water and first aid care and psychosocial support.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by April 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by July 2012).

[<Click here for the DREF budget;](#)
[here for contact details;](#)
[here to view the map of the affected area>](#)



Volunteers of the Chilean Red Cross (ChRC) visited affected families that have lost their homes, personal belongings and livelihoods. Source: ChRC

The situation

On 29 December 2011, a forest fire was reported in the **Biobío region**, affecting the communes¹ of Quillón and Florida, province of Ñuble. The fire rapidly spread due to high temperatures and favourable wind

¹ Communes (comuna in Spanish) in Chile correspond to the third-level administrative division of the country, similar to municipalities. The country is divided into 15 regions, 54 provinces and 346 communes.

conditions, prompting the Chilean government to issue a red alert on 1 January 2012. More than 500 persons have been evacuated from the area as some 529 brigadiers, fire fighters and soldiers continue to work to contain the fires that have consumed more than 30,253 hectares of forest, grasslands and crops, and destroyed over 200 homes.

On 2 January, four communes in the province of Ñuble were declared “catastrophe zones”: Florida, Quillón, Ralqui and San Rosendo. Three days later, on 5 January, the same area was also declared as “zone of agricultural emergency”, which facilitated the mobilization of resources for the recovery of livelihoods. Current estimates, based on preliminary rapid assessments, point to at least 300 families affected by loss of crops, irrigation systems and agricultural equipment. A 75-year-old man lost his life after refusing to evacuate his home.

Simultaneously, the National Forest Corporation (Cooperación Nacional Forestal - CONAF) also reported the quick development of severe fires in the **Maule region**. On 2 January, a red alert was declared for the provinces of Cauquenes and Linares and a yellow alert for the rest of the region. The Maule region had two main sources of fires located in Huelque and Quella, Cauquenes commune. Although as of 10 January, these two sources were extinguished, they have destroyed 8,922 hectares, affected 200 families and damaged 30 homes. In addition, 40 families are without electricity supply which is also affecting their access to safe water, as most homes depend on water pumps to draw the water from wells.

Moreover, other regions of Chile are also under alert due to the presence of forest fires. On 27 December a fire started in Torres del Paine National Park, located in the Magallanes region in Chile's far south, and La Araucanía region also reported three wildfires that took the lives of seven brigadiers. As the fires in La Araucanía recently developed, no detailed information of affectation is yet available, but some 2,140 hectares have been destroyed in Carahue and Lumaco.

As of 9 January, the National Office of Emergency of the Interior Ministry (Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior – ONEMI) reported 11 warnings across the country: seven early warnings, three yellow alerts and one red alert, the last one for the province of Última Esperanza, in the Magallanes region. The following table present the status of some of the main fires:

Region	Contained	Extinguished	Active	Total
Maule	--	2	---	2
Biobío	6	4	3	13
Magallanes	1	--	--	1
Araucanía	--	5	---	5
				21

Based on information gathered through rapid assessments, 254 homes have been destroyed or severely affected by the fires, the majority from the commune of Quillón, in the Biobío region:

Region	Commune	Homes destroyed	Affected persons
Maule	Cauquenes	30	19
Biobío	Florida	10	80
	Quillón	166	747
	Ranqui	47	235
	Quirihue	1	1
Araucanía	Carahue	---	--
	Lumaco	---	--
	Total	254	1,082

A large sector of the economy in the affected areas is dependent on fruit and forest crops (such as vineyards, eucalyptus trees), many of which were severely affected by the fires.

Coordination and partnerships

The Chilean government has concentrated its efforts to control the fires, deploying personnel from CONAF, the Fire Department and the National Army who are also supported by brigadiers and air tankers lent by neighbour countries and private companies. The national authorities have also coordinated the preventive evacuation of families.

In response to the emergency situation, the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism have declared that it will deliver subsidies to affected families in need to rebuild their homes. It is expected that these affected families will have a permanent solution before the end of the year. In the meantime, the Ministry of Planning and Development will provide 1-room transitional shelters (mediaguas) to families whose homes were destroyed by the wildfires. Furthermore, ONEMI is coordinating the distribution of relief items such as food, clothing and blankets.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In line with the red alert declared, the Chilean Red Cross (ChRC) activated their volunteers and branches in the affected areas, particularly in the commune of Quillón. Under the request of ONEMI, the National Society assisted affected persons evacuated into collective centres and completed damage and needs assessments.

In addition, after a technical meeting with ONEMI and municipal authorities in Quillón, it was agreed that the ChRC would lead the humanitarian assistance carried out by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To support the work of volunteers and staff in the affected areas of Biobío, the National Society has also deployed a National Intervention Team (NIT) composed of four general NIT members, four water and sanitation NITs, and two Health NITs specialized in psychosocial support and emergency health.

The first response activities of the National Society were focused on:

- Assistance in collective centres: The National Society has dispatched 40 hygiene kits and 6 family food parcels to the commune of Quillón. In addition, volunteers assisted with the cleaning and refurbishing of sanitation facilities. On 3 January, when collective centres were actively in use, volunteers carried out recreational activities with children.
- Distribution of potable water
- Evacuations and first aid care: The ChRC was requested to support evacuations in areas at risk due to the approaching fire. The National Society is also providing first aid care to affected families and personnel working in the containment of fires, treating mostly first grade burns and referring their control and the more serious cases to the government health services.
- Fire containment: Three water pumps (with capacity to pump 500 litres per minute) were dispatched to support governmental authorities to contain the fires. The pumps are being used to fill the air tankers in use in Quillón.

The needs

- Emergency health: The National Society is supporting basic health services with the treatment of first grade burns of affected families arriving into collective centres and of personnel combating the fires. The ChRC has already dispatched to the affected areas first aid kits. However, the latest reports inform that a new dispatch will be needed and that it would be convenient to provide families with the means to quickly treat minor injuries. In addition, many people, particularly children and the elderly, are experiencing respiratory problems due to the presence of ash in the air. Protective mask for these vulnerable groups have been requested. Finally, many families are confronted with the loss of homes and crops that will require a long period of recovery. A team of volunteers specialized in psychosocial support have been deployed and is intensively working to strengthen the coping mechanisms of these families.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion: Three different types of support have been requested from the National Society. First, affected families that lost all their belongings are in need of items of personal hygiene. Second, families are in need of safe water and means to safely storage it. Third, the transitional shelter (mediaguas) that is being provided by governmental authorities does not include bathrooms. Sanitation equipment in-line with Sphere standards will be required until permanent housing is completed in 10 to 12 months. This DREF-supported operation will assist with the first two needs, while the National Society will cover the last need alongside Partner National Societies.
- Relief distribution: Although governmental authorities and other NGOs are assisting with food, clothing, blankets and transitional shelters, a gap is still present in terms of household items such as kitchen sets and tarpaulins to better isolate transitional shelters.
- Recovery of livelihoods: Most of the affected families lost all their crops and livelihoods as well as their homes. The National Society, with the support of Partner National Societies, is considering extending their ReD card programme to assist some of these families.

- Shelter: More than 250 families have been left homeless as a result of the wildfires. The Chilean government will be providing transitional shelters (mediaguas) while permanent housing is completed in 10 to 12 months. The Ministry of Housing stated that the reconstruction of destroyed homes is expected to start before March 2012.

Selection of people to be reached: The ChRC will be working with 250 families (1,000 persons) that lost all their possession due to the forest fires in the communes of San Rosendo, Florida, Quillón and Ralqui in the **Biobío region**, and in the commune of Cauquenes in the **Maule region**.

The proposed operation

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: The immediate needs of 250 families affected by the wildfires are met through the distribution of relief items

Outputs: 250 families receive kitchen sets and tarpaulins.

Activities planned:

- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in the collective centres and affected communities.
- Develop a distribution plan.
- Procure or replenish and distribute relief items (kitchen sets and tarpaulins).
- Monitor the relief activities and provide reporting on distributions.

The kitchen sets to be distributed contain:

- 5 plates and bowls
- 5 cups
- 5 sets of cutlery
- 1 cooking spoon and knife
- 1 pan and 2 pots

Since a national emergency has not been declared the customs clearance process in Chile will be lengthy and the National Society will not have a tax exemption. Therefore, all the relief items distributed through this DREF-supported operation will be procured locally.

Emergency health

Outcome: Affected families have access to first aid services and psychosocial support

Output 1: 250 families receive family first aid kits and are informed about their use.

Activities planned:

- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in the collective centres and affected communities.
- Develop a distribution plan.
- Procure and distribute family first aid kits
- Inform families on the use of the first aid kits
- Monitor and report on health activities

Output 2: Families sheltered in collective centres receive psychosocial support and first aid care.

Activities planned:

- Provide first aid care to the affected population
- Review and update inventories of first aid kits used by volunteers and replenish them as needed.
- Provide psychosocial support to affected groups in collective centres.
- Monitor and report on health activities

As the area affected by the wildfires were also affected by the 27 February 2010 earthquake, the families receiving the first aid kits are also being targeted through the Community-based Health and First Aid *in action* approach with the support of the emergency appeal (MDRCL006).

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases is reduced through the provision of

hygiene kits and access to safe water and means for safe storage.

Output: 250 families receive 1 hygiene kit, 1 water filter and 2 buckets with lid

Activities planned:

- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in the collective centres and affected communities.
- Develop a distribution plan.
- Procure or replenish and distribute relief items (hygiene kits, water filters and buckets).
- Monitor and provide reporting on distributions.

The hygiene kits to be distributed contain:

- 1kg of laundry soap (bar)
- 12 rolls of toilet paper
- 1,300g of body soap
- 500g of toothpaste
- 5 toothbrushes
- 1,240g of shampoo
- 5 shaving razors
- 80 units of feminine pads
- 5 small towels
- 2 combs
- 1 plastic bag

In addition to the above mentioned activities, the DREF will support the ChRC to procure protective gear for volunteers working in the affected areas. The gear may include items such as helmets, masks, leather gloves, goggles and water bottles.

Contact information

- **In Chile:** Yolanda Muñoz Conte, director general of the Chilean Red Cross; phone: +562 777 1448; and email: yolanda.munoz@cruzroja.cl.
- **IFRC regional representation:** Gustavo Ramirez, regional representative for the Southern Cone and Brazil; phone: +541 1495 17420; and email: gustavo.ramirez@ifrc.org.
- **IFRC Americas zone office:** Jorge Zequeira, PADRU coordinator; phone: 507 317 3050; and email: jorge.zequeira@ifrc.org
- **In Geneva:** Pablo Medina, operations quality assurance senior officer; phone: +41 22 730 4381; fax: +41 22 733 0395; and email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org

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

- **In IFRC Americas zone office:** Jane Grimshaw, PMER manager; phone: +507.317.3050; email: jane.grimshaw@ifrc.org

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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 \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) 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.

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

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
 2. Enable healthy and safe living.
 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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DREF OPERATION

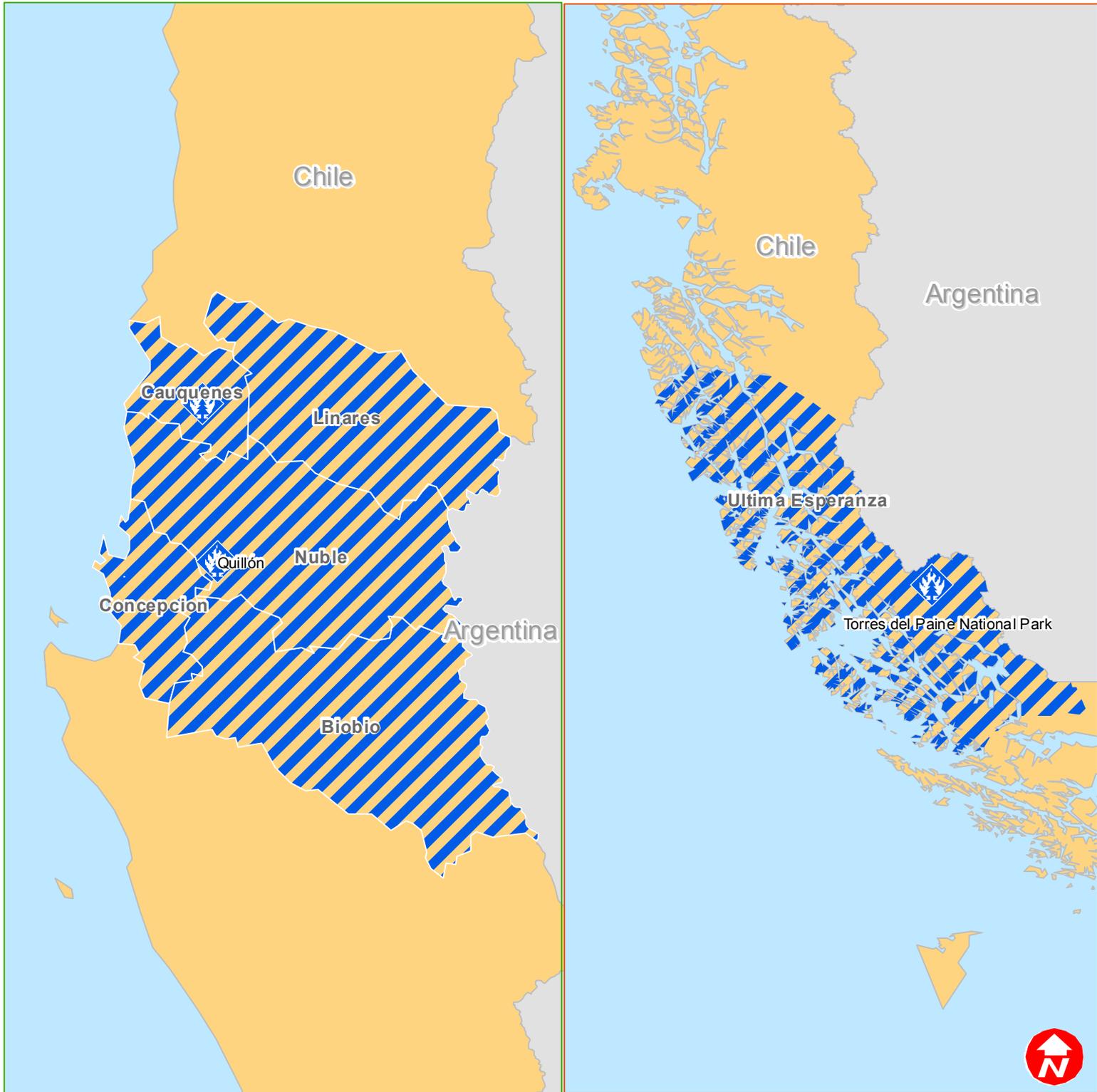
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MDRCL008 Chile Wildfires

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	7,500
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	
Food	
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	13,750
Medical & First Aid	9,250
Teaching Materials	
Ustensils & Tools	12,250
Other Supplies & Services	
Emergency Response Units	
Cash Disbursements	
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	42,750
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles Purchase	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machiney & Equipment	
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	
Dsitribution & Monitoring	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	3,300
Logistics Services	
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	3,300
International Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	3,000
Volunteers	6,500
Total PERSONNEL	9,500
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Travel	4,500
Information & Public Relations	500
Office Costs	1,800
Communications	1,250
Financial Charges	1,000
Other General Expenses	
Shared Support Services	
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	9,050
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	4,199
Total INDIRECT COSTS	4,199
TOTAL BUDGET	68,799



Chile: Wildfires



Main places affected by fires



Affected provinces