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# Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Ecuador: Wildfires

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**DREF operation n° MDREC006  
GLIDE n° FR-2012-000167-ECU  
24 September 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.

**CHF 102,000 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC) in delivering immediate assistance to at least 3,000 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** Between the months of June and September 2012, over 2,900 wildfires have affected Ecuador, destroying some 15,500 hectares of land, many of which were in urban areas or affected subsistence crops. As a result, on 13 September, an orange alert was declared in 8 provinces and over 2,000 persons, including 753 Red Cross volunteers, have been involved in the response to the emergency.



Since the wildfires started in June, volunteers of the Ecuadorian Red Cross have been supporting with pre-hospital care, evacuations and psychosocial support to affected communities and relief teams. Source Ecuadorian Red Cross.

This DREF is to support the National Society's work in evacuations, pre-hospital and first aid care, psychosocial support and risk awareness campaigns in the areas affected by the fires. It will also ensure the National Society is ready to provide relief items to some 100 affected families as the fires continue.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by December 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by March 2013).

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

## The situation

Based on the information provided by the Risk Management National Secretariat (Secretaría Nacional de Gestión de Riesgo, SNGR), since the month of June 2,912 forest fires have affected different areas of Ecuador. The fires have left behind three deaths, several wounded, and 15,531 hectares of burnt land, of which 142 were of crops that have been lost completely while 30 hectares are of crops partially damaged, affecting the livelihoods of several families. On average, there have been around 26 fires per day.

Active forest fires as of 18 September affecting over 800 hectares			
Province	Sector	Hectares	Comments
El Oro	Chilla	1900	12 days of fires
Chimborazo	Pallatanga ( comunidad de Jabuli y Bushcud y las Rosas)	800	15 days of fires. Affecting protected forests
	La Dolorosa	1000	
	Pangor	1000	
Pichincha	Chillogallo	TBD	80 persons evacuated
	Vía Chiriboga (Parroquia Loja)	TBD	
	Tandapi	TBD	
Loja	Cisne San Pedro	TBD	10 days of fire
	Loma Redonda	TBD	6 days of fires. Need to walk 4 hours to reach the area
	Pan deAzúcar	TBD	
Azuay	Molleturo	TBD	
	Chaucha	TBD	
Cañar	Bellavista	TBD	
Imbabura	Pisangacho	TBD	Very close to Pisangacho community 5 days of fire
	Turupamba AltoCerro Imbabura)	TBD	
	La Bolsa	TBD	
Carchi	El Moran	1500	11 days of fire. Close to El Angel natural reserve
Cotopaxi	Cara sureste de los Ilinizas	TBD	
	Flanco occidental del Volcán Cotopaxi	TBD	

Some 4,000 persons have also been affected by the interruption of the water supply, 3,000 from Aloasí in the Mejía canton, Pichincha province, and 1,000 from Pueblo Viejo, in El Oro province. At the moment, the local governments are assisting with the water needs. In addition, 130 persons were evacuated preventively, 80 in Chillogallo (Pichincha) and 50 in Morán (Carchi), although they were able to return once the fires were controlled. Thus far, 12 houses have been affected of which 3 are completely destroyed, and the families are being assisted by the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing and the SNGR. Assessments are being completed to determine the number of families affected by the lost of crops and animals in the provinces of Loja and El Oro. As result of the current situation Ecuador Risk Management Secretariat established an orange alert on 13 September for the provinces of Pichincha, Imbabura, Carchi, Cañar, Loja, El Oro, Azuay, Cotopaxi through decree No. SNGR-033-2012.

The ongoing fires have also affected buffer zones around different protected areas of Ecuador: Cotopaxi National Park, Machalilla, Ecological Reserve of Ilinizas, Wildlife Reserve of Paschoa, buffer zone around Geobotánica Pululahua Reserve, areas around Ecological Reserve Ángel and Protected Forest of El Corazón.

Due to the amount of fires, rescue teams have had to cover full shifts of 24 or 48 hours. The rescue team members working with extinction of the fires have been affected by smoke and injuries. Some 49 persons from the fire department and from the local communities fighting the fires have been diagnosed with breathing problems and damage to eyes. Many of the fires are occurring close to streams, mid-mountain and other inaccessible areas.

The current situation is due to the lack of rain in the region that combined with dry forests and strong winds facilitates the spread and intensification of fires. Meteorological forecasts from the International Research Center of El Niño Phenomena (Centro Internacional para la Investigación del Fenómeno del Niño, CIIFEN) anticipate this condition to continue, with rains below average and temperatures above average for the September to November period.

## Coordination and partnerships

Following the declaration of an orange alert in 8 provinces of the country on Thursday 13 September, some 2,000 people have been mobilized to the affected areas from the Fire Department, Armed Forces, the Metropolitan Police, the National Police as well as technical staff from various ministries. These teams are providing for the emergency care, completing damage assessment and planning recovery actions. The National Society forms part of these response teams formed by the following actors:

- 750 people of the Quito Fire Department
- 45 vehicles with drivers and 30 community forest guides
- 36 groups of the Metropolitan Public Company of Movility and Public Works (Empresa Pública Metropolitana de Movilidad y Obras Públicas, EPMMOP) with 3 people in each group
- 20 groups of the Metropolitan Public Company of Water and Sanitation(Empresa Pública Metropolitana de Agua Potable y Saneamiento (EPMAPS) with 3 people in each group
- 20 members of the Metropolitan Police
- 450 members of the Armed Forces
- 753 Ecuadorian Red Cross volunteers

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In its auxiliary role to the local authorities in the emergency, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has supported and coordinated with different relief actors like the Fire Department and SNGR, providing assistance with:

- pre-hospital care and basic first aid
- psychosocial support
- evacuation support
- sensitization for the prevention of fires in the communities

Due to the number of fires occurring daily in different parts of the country, the Fire Department is maintaining constant coordination with the Ecuadorian Red Cross. The National Society is working alongside this institution to provide emergency care in the areas affected as well as in response to the calls received through the emergency line (ECU 911) to ensure that the Fire Department can fulfil its responsibilities.

To respond to the current emergency, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has 753 volunteers, of which 350 are specialized in:

	#
Pre-hospital care teams	117
Psychosocial support teams	24
Re-establishment of family links teams	12
Damage and needs assessments teams	25
National Intervention Teams	65
Rescue Teams	20
Ambulance teams	23
Support vehicles	35
Registration teams	29

## The needs

Selection of people to be reached: most of the needs are related to the health of the persons living near the fires and those working to control it. Many members of the affected communities are volunteering to work in the control of the fires but lack basic knowledge of the risks or the required personal protection equipment. The fire fumes, particularly when combined with agricultural chemicals, are affecting the eyes and respiratory system of those persons near-by, aggravating the conditions of those with chronic lung diseases. In

addition, with fire control teams working long shifts in difficult conditions and many families losing their source of livelihood, stress management is also a strong need.

Therefore, the current DREF-supported operation will assist the Ecuadorian Red Cross to continue with pre-hospital and first aid care, psychosocial support and risk awareness campaigns in the areas affected by the fires, as well as preventive evacuations when needed. In addition, the National Society will acquire some basic relief items, food parcels and hygiene kits, to assist some 100 families (500 persons) that have been affected by the fires, and protective gear for 2,500 persons. The protective gear will be distributed as follow:

<b>Province</b>	<b>No. of persons</b>
Carchi	250
Imbabura	300
Cotopaxi	300
Chimborazo	250
Cañar	250
Azuay	300
Loja	250
El Oro	300
Pichincha	300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,500</b>

## The proposed operation

<b>Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)</b>
<b>Outcome: 100 affected families from Loja and El Oro provinces will benefit from the provision of essential food and non-food items to alleviate the effects of the emergency.</b>
<b>Output: 100 families receive food parcels and hygiene kits</b>
<b>Activities planned:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and select families in affected areas.</li> <li>• Procure locally food parcels and hygiene kits.</li> <li>• Develop a beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.</li> <li>• Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.</li> <li>• Monitor the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.</li> </ul>

Although the majority of fires have been in forest and isolated areas, a small number of families have lost their homes and possessions, particularly in Loja and El Oro provinces, where fires have affected homes and hectares of subsistence crops. The National Society wants to acquire 100 food parcels and hygiene kits to be able to support these families and others that may be affected before the situation is controlled.

<b>Emergency health</b>
<b>Outcome: The health risks caused by the fires are reduced through the provision of protective equipment, first aid care and psychosocial support.</b>
<b>Output 1: 2,500 persons are provided with protective goggles and masks.</b>
<b>Output 2: Rescue teams and persons in affected areas are provided with first aid care and psychosocial support.</b>
<b>Activities planned:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support rescue and evacuation efforts.</li> <li>• Replenishment of medical supplies.</li> <li>• Provide first aid care to the affected population and provide referral and transfer services to health centres.</li> <li>• Carry out stress management activities with rescue and fire-fighting teams and community members.</li> <li>• Provide protective gear , visibility items and insurance to the National Society's volunteers.</li> </ul>

- Provide protective gear to community members.
- Complete fire risks awareness campaigns through radio and television spots.

All activities are being coordinated with the Fire Department and the SNGR, as the National Society is supporting them not only with rescue teams, but also with pre-hospital care and psychosocial support for stress management. This assistance is being provided to:

- Rescue and fire fighting teams formed by governmental institutions and community volunteers.
- Families directly affected by the loss of family members or of material possessions.

The stress management sessions are carried out both during the working day, and at the end of the working shifts.

In addition, an awareness campaign will be carried out through radio and television to inform the public in affected areas about the risks caused by the forest fires and how to prevent them. The National Society estimates that some 90,000 persons can be indirectly reached through this campaign.

A coordinator is being hired by the National Society to give adequate support to this DREF funded operation.

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## Contact information

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

- **National Society:** Rosa Martha Lobo Gonzalez, Secretary General of the Ecuadorian Red Cross; phone: +593 2 2954587; email: [rlobo@cruzroja.org.ec](mailto:rlobo@cruzroja.org.ec)
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1. DREF budget [below](#)
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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 (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster 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.

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**Saving lives, changing minds.**



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

24-Sep-12

MDREC006 ECUADOR WILDFIRES

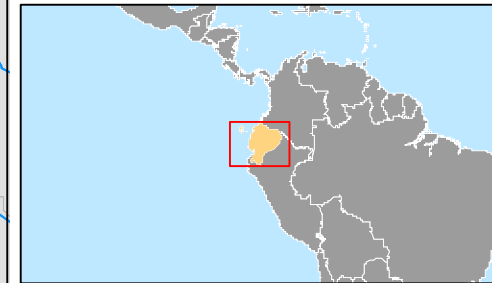
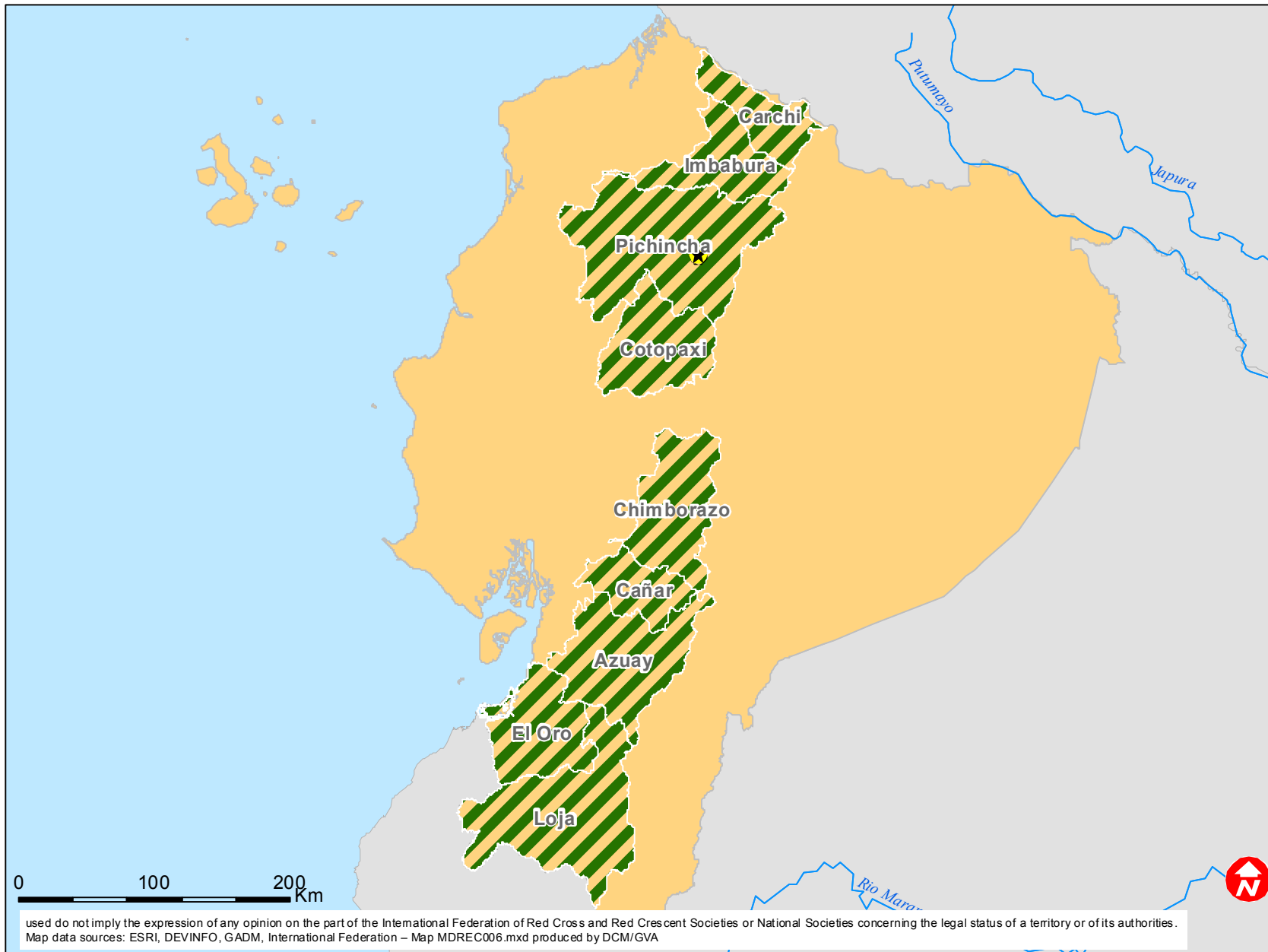
DREF Grant  
Budget CHF


## Budget Group

Shelter - Relief	
Shelter - Transitional	
Construction - Housing	
Construction - Facilities	
Construction - Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	
Food	3,728
Seeds & Plants	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	3,728
Medical & First Aid	11,370
Teaching Materials	17,056
Utensils & Tools	
Other Supplies & Services	31,502
Cash Disbursements	
<b>Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES</b>	<b>67,384</b>
Land & Buildings	
Vehicles	
Computer & Telecom Equipment	
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	
Medical Equipment	
Other Machinery & Equipment	
<b>Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>0</b>
Storage, Warehousing	
Distribution & Monitoring	1,398
Transport & Vehicle Costs	8,854
Logistics Services	
<b>Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE</b>	<b>10,252</b>
International Staff	
National Staff	
National Society Staff	1,398
Volunteers	8,772
<b>Total PERSONNEL</b>	<b>10,170</b>
Consultants	
Professional Fees	
<b>Total CONSULTANTS &amp; PROFESSIONAL FEES</b>	<b>0</b>
Workshops & Training	
<b>Total WORKSHOP &amp; TRAINING</b>	<b>0</b>
Travel	1,398
Information & Public Relations	652
Office Costs	1,957
Communications	3,029
Financial Charges	932
Other General Expenses	
Shared Office and Services Costs	
<b>Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>7,969</b>
Partner National Societies	
Other Partners (NGOs, UN, other)	
<b>Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme and Services Support Recovery	6,225
<b>Total INDIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>6,225</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>102,000</b>



## Ecuador: Forest fires



 Affected provinces