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# Operation Update Report

## IRAN: Droughts

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>DREF n°: MDRIR005</b>	<b>GLIDE n°: <a href="#">DR-2021-000089-IRN</a></b>
<b>Operation update n° 1; date of issue: 11 May 2022</b>	<b>Timeframe covered by this update: 24 July 2022 – 31 January 2022</b>
<b>Operation start date: 24 July 2021</b>	<b>Operation timeframe: 7 months (extended for 2 months) Operation end date: 28 February 2022 (extended from 31 December 2021)</b>
<b>DREF allocated: CHF 748,013</b>	
<b>N° of people being assisted: 303,371 people</b>	
<b>Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation:</b> The International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).	
<b>Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation:</b> The government of Iran, Local NGOs, UN Agencies, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – France.	

### Summary of major revisions made to emergency plan of action:

This DREF operation timeframe has been extended for two months to complete activities that have been delayed or suspended due to measures related to the recent disasters across the country such as earthquakes, floods, and population movement. Also, an assessment is underway to chalk out which national/private banks in the country are not under sanctions lists so that the cash transfer programming component can be materialized or modified in transaction modalities. The remaining activities are as below:

- Unconditional/multipurpose cash distributions in target provinces via bank transfer
- Cash component needs banking assessments
- Financial reports and reconciliation of working advance need time as well to close the operation.

## A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

### Description of the disaster

#### Overall Drought Situation in Iran:

The Iranian climate is mostly arid or semi-arid and it is heavily affected by depleting water resources, as a result of rising demand, salinization, groundwaters overexploitation, and increasing drought frequency. The country, where groundwater is the primary source of water, has a long history of inefficiency in its water distribution network, particularly in the agricultural sector. Despite not experiencing food insecurity, Iran faces paramount challenges in safeguarding long-term water access during the dry spell. All sectors that rely on the water are

exposed, from agriculture to power production and public water supply. From 2 to 20 million people are at high to medium risk of drought-related impacts. On top of poor precipitation during the 2020-2021 winter, high temperatures have caused more snow to melt, reducing the amount of water stored for later use during the drier months (i.e., late spring and summer).

Since the beginning of the drought onset, research units, the media, and public authorities have been emphasizing the potential severity with time. On 10 July 2021, the First Vice President of Iran, Eshaq Jahangiri stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran requires national solidarity and integration to overcome challenges and past crises. He described water as one of the biggest problems in Iran, saying “if we cannot deal with challenges in time, they can become complicated issues”.

While meteorological/hydrological droughts act as triggers and intensify the rate of depletion in country-wide groundwater storage, basin-scale groundwater depletion in Iran is primarily caused by extensive human water withdrawals. Continuation of unsustainable groundwater management in Iran can lead to potentially irreversible effects on land and the environment, threatening the country's water, food, and socio-economic security.

According to a recent alert in March 2022 from GDACS (Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System) Iran has been categorized in Orange level along with MENA Neighboring countries. According to Iran's National Drought Warning and Monitoring Center, the country was facing one of its toughest rainfall seasons in 50 years.

The rainfall had dropped by nearly 50% in South Khorasan province this year compared to the long-term average and by as much as 80% in southeastern Sistan and Baluchistan provinces. Drought-linked water shortages have also led to rolling power cuts in areas supplied by [hydroelectric plants](#), which provide about 15% of Iran's power supply, according to the energy ministry. According to the World Meteorological Organization, over the next five years (2021-2025) the average rainfall is expected to be 75 percent lower than normal and the average temperature is between 50 to 75 percent higher than the long-term average. According to the national center for drought and crisis management, since the beginning of the current water year (23 September 2020), precipitation has declined by 41 percent compared to the long-term average and 53 percent compared to the same period last year (May 2021). The lowest rainfall occurred in Hormozgan, Sistan-Baluchestan, and Kerman provinces, being short of rain by 86, 82, and 65 percent, respectively. Over the last two years, Iran was doused with rain which was unprecedented during the past 50 years, but last year, the country faced drought, which shows a 40 percent decrease in rainfall.



*Photos: Iran affected by long-term drought. Credit: IRCS*

## Summary of current response

### Overview of Operating National Society

Over the last ten years, the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has focused its efforts on providing more sustainable water resources for villagers through the establishment of water reservoirs, providing services and social support to vulnerable groups as well as distributing safe drinking water, health items, and livelihood packages among the vulnerable groups, especially the women-headed household and patients.

The IRCS is conducting a national initiative titled “Water Donation,” which began three years ago. When the drought hit the country’s southern and south-eastern provinces, the IRCS decided to launch the project with the aim of providing drinking water in remote areas. The current DREF addresses mainly the severity which triggered high vulnerability and scaled up basic needs like livelihoods, health, sustaining, and making water available at a fast pace. Water donation project is more of recovery and sustaining the infrastructure or rehabilitation, but the current DREF is contributing to meet the basic needs which (continuous) four years of drought (in the area) has disturbed, and the current situation further worsened.

The project is divided into three phases: providing livelihood assistance, medical services, and addressing water scarcity by putting efforts into the availability of water to communities, water purification systems, and plumbing in underdeveloped areas so that the population has access to safe drinking water. In four drought-affected provinces, like Sistan and Balouchestan, South Khorasan, Kerman, and Hormozgan, IRCS volunteers provided guidance, support, skills, and participation.

### Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The IFRC has a presence in Iran since 1991 and has been providing technical support in Capacity Building initiatives and supporting IRCS in Disaster Management, Shelter, Disaster Law, Youth, and volunteers as well as Health. There are no participating National Societies (PNS) present in the country; however, IRCS has a memorandum of understanding with the German Red Cross (search and rescue sniffer dogs action, peer-to-peer exchange). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has a delegation based in Tehran with a various number of humanitarian activities in cooperation with the IRCS and is on standby to support the IRCS operation (e.g. through health support to migrants, Mine Risk Education and Restoring Family Links).

## Overview of non-RCRC actors in-country

**Governmental and Legal Actions to control drought and its impact:** According to the act of parliament, IRCS is the national lead for any disaster/crisis response in the country. Once the situation needs crisis response, it is IRCS that is supported by law to lead, even concerned ministries are bound to cooperate with IRCS as the lead in specific crisis/disaster response modes. At the NDMO level, the convener of relief response is IRCS. All UN/INGOs/NGOs have to work under the IRCS role and mandate for initial response.

Water supply sustainability, storage capacity expansion, demand management, urban water waste reduction, water purification, facility resilience, and the number of people using sewage disposal services are among the actions taken by the government to control the drought. The government has put in place a plan to transport water from the Oman Sea and the Persian Gulf to the southern provinces including Yazd, Kerman, and Hormozgan. This project solely satisfies the needs of copper and iron factories; it cannot offer drinking water because desalination is a complicated process that necessitates expensive modern equipment. Another government initiative is the construction of stone and cement dams in cities such as Jiroft, Bam, and Nisa.

The Welfare Organization and the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee provide a variety of services including communities' social health and better living.

## Needs analysis and scenario planning

### Needs analysis

The effects of the drought in recent years have had a significant impact on various aspects of the province's development, people's lives, and basic resources. Water scarcity has resulted in a reduction in Minab, Jegin, and Shamil dams. Severe reduction in groundwater level in the province's main plains, salinization, and reduced quality of groundwater resources due to improper abstraction, is resulting in:

1. Decreasing the areas under cultivation and livestock and poultry population.
2. Reducing the number of agricultural products and depending on water import.
3. Reducing discharge and drying out water resources such as wells and flumes.
4. Decreasing food products and increasing the price of food items.
5. Decreasing employment, income, and its social and economic consequences.
6. Increasing subsidence and soil erosion and its consequences.
7. Reducing the quality of life for border residents and problems of border security maintenance.
8. Putting family security, hygiene, and health at risk.
9. Increasing the negative impact on the COVID-19 situation and operation.
10. Increasing the migration from villages to towns.
11. Increasing tension among those who benefit from water resources.

Targeted provinces are going through serious multiple crises like red coding in COVID-19, droughts severity, and possible Afghan refugee influx operations will take place in these eastern bordering provinces.

Due to depletion of resources (sanctions suffocation), the pressure of scaling up with agility and ensuring the continuation of mandated public services in crisis/natural disasters, expectations of stakeholders from IRCS in these dire multiple crisis times, the sensitivity of the bordering provinces with Pakistan/Afghanistan (IRCS access/acceptance being only biggest well-rooted national set up), all these domains are compelling to launch DREF progressing to Emergency Appeal. IFRC is expected to play the added value role by offering tools/resources to support the humanitarian action of IRCS.

The IRCS, in coordination with local authorities, conducted field assessments in the affected districts and branches in the affected provinces to identify the immediate needs and priorities. According to the preliminary assessments carried out in the areas, WASH, health, and livelihood packages are among the most pressing needs of the drought-affected people. Under this DREF operation, the IRCS aims to ensure the effective continuation of

the humanitarian operations, specifically for WASH, health, and livelihoods for the most vulnerable people. Unconditional cash grants will give dignified choice to the targeted population under DREF. The same modality might evolve differently under appeal.

### Operation Risk Assessment

There are constraints in the affected areas due to cold waves, snow, and rainfalls. Some areas are still hard to reach due to road damage. Also, the health of staff/volunteers can be at risk if the scale of operation is demanding more workload.

RISK AREA	CONTROLS MANAGEMENT
Staff and volunteer health: risk of contracting COVID-19 through community-based activities in the response.	The IRCS has stated the vaccination of all staff and relief workers involved in this operation since 03 July 2021 Strict adherence to IRCS COVID-19 awareness protocols, Refreshing the risk awareness communication aspects by utilizing existing COVID-19 protection audio/visual learning platforms for staff/volunteers. Relief operations manager prioritizing the monitoring of adherence.
Increase in COVID-19 community transmission if displacement occurs due to not only aftershocks but also harsh weather. In possible shelters, the COVID-19 transmission can scale up.	IRCS will choose places for IDPs where social distancing can be observed meaning an increasing number of places and the design of IDP transit setting could be less populated.
Disruption on the access to deliver support such as road cut-off access routes affected due to force majeure.	Mapping alternative routes and transportation.
Negative media coverage related to the handling of the response operation.	Proactive communication with media and stakeholders. Community Engagement and Accountability.
Procurement delays of replenishment stocks.	Local procurement due to COVID-19 and sanctions on international procurement will take longer. IRCS is anticipating depleting stocks in winters at a faster pace, not to wait for a long time of international procurement.
Pressure on local natural/market resources.	In case the market is not able to tackle the load of food commodities, the DREF might be adapted to food basket provision.

## B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

### Proposed strategy

The overall objective of this DREF operation is to protect and save lives, dignity and to mitigate adverse effects on the deteriorating livelihoods, trying to organize safe drinking water access and personal hygiene.

Most notably, over the coming five months, to support the provision of basic health care and MHPSS to communities affected by the ongoing drought.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society seeks to act in the direction of sustainable development and offer sustainable facilities in regions plagued by water shortages, in addition to providing support services.

Continuity of the Iranian Red Crescent Society's field activities in response to the drought crisis for the next months serves the following sectorial interventions:

1. WASH: Water supply and sanitation, including the renovation of flumes and wells, the improvement of the state of water tanks, the purification of water, and the repair of water tanks.
2. Health: Improving the level of health including public health, mental health, and PSS (MHPSS). Deployment of volunteer physicians as health units to visit patients in need.
3. Livelihood and Basic Needs: Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), social damage reduction, and basic needs fulfillment.

During the initial phase of the project, a working group comprised of local provincial officials from several disciplines identifies needs, methods of action, and duties of each person and system in accordance with the project's timetable.

They are in charge of purchasing, distributing, and providing needed items. All responsible and local agencies will support the activities based on previous similar efforts. Local authorities consist of villagers and local councils.

### Exit Strategy

The IRCS water donation project is in its fourth year in the same areas. This rehabilitation project is renewed annually, and some local institutional donors contribute on a regular basis. The severe dry season and lack of rains have put enormous strain on local resources; additionally, the severity of the drought is impacting the lack of water access, mental health and access to health services, and access to food for humans and livestock, which has compelled to respond via DREF under the meeting basic needs criteria.

Droughts cannot be addressed locally without international assistance (available resources depleting). Sanctions have a significant impact on access to resources (financial/technical/material). As a result, one exit strategy is to combine the DREF operation with a parallel ongoing water donation initiative. However, for the long-term continuation of humanitarian action, IRCS/IFRC have launched an [Emergency appeal](#) addressing the droughts to cover longer-term impact and continuity of support.

## C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

	<h3>Livelihoods and basic needs</h3> <p><b>People reached: 13,200 people</b>  Male: <b>6,732</b>  Female: <b>6,468</b></p>		
<p><b>Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore, and strengthen their livelihoods.</b></p>			
<b>Indicators:</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
# of households provided with unconditional /multipurpose cash grants and able to cover their monthly basic needs		3,300	(pending)
<p><b>Progress towards outcomes</b></p> <p>A feasibility report and market analysis are conducted on the cash transfer programme (CTP) using banks that are not there in sanction lists. In addition, the IFRC is unable to channel funds to Iran. Accordingly, the IRCS could not deposit the fund into the beneficiaries' bank accounts. However, the National Society is considering alternative ways of delivering the cash to the people to be reached.</p> <p>The National Society is looking into other methods to provide a quick response, considering the possibility of expanding the target population. Monitoring, follow-up, and satisfaction surveys will be conducted after the cash transfer mechanisms are implemented. Transferring funds to Iran remains a challenge that is associated with the imposed sanctions. Alert mechanisms to support the needs of affected populations are being analyzed.</p>			



## Health

**People reached: 19,761**

Male: 9,881

Female: 9,880

**Outcome 1: The immediate risks to the health of the affected populations are reduced through improved access to critical health and nutrition services.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
% of people assisted over the total number of people affected	100	49

**Health Output 2.1: Improved access to basic and emergency health care for the targeted population and communities.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of deployed mobile medical clinics	20	20
# of days the mobile medical clinics are deployed	180	180

In collaboration with the health line, health personnel from Headquarters visited drought-affected areas to assess and monitor the health situation and coordinate with authorities. The IRCS has deployed a health mobile clinic and a team of volunteer doctors and paramedics to areas based on common diseases in each region, in collaboration with medical sciences universities. Among the additional activities performed are:

- Providing health services by deploying 141 volunteer doctors and paramedics to targeted areas,
- Supplying 380 different types of medicines to the patients in need,
- supplying 17,662 pieces of medical equipment to the patients in need,
- Providing 237 oxygen concentrators to the patients in need.
- Distributed 15,503 health items among the affected people across the provinces.

The National Society has reached a total number of 303,371 people through health promotion campaigns and awareness sessions. Monthly monitoring visits were conducted to track operational progress as well.



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

**People reached: 15,000**

Male: 7,600

Female: 7,400

**WASH Outcome 1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of WASH assessments conducted in the targeted areas	3	3
# of monitoring visits in the targeted areas	3	3
% of target population with access to an improved water source	100	
# of households provided with a set of essential hygiene items	7,500	
# of people provided with safe water in targeted areas	30,000	
# of people reached with awareness sessions	54,000	

**WASH Output 1.1: Continuous assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene situation is carried out in targeted communities.**

**Progress towards outcomes**

The IRCS has provided safe drinking water in identified villages across the drought-affected provinces by installing water purifiers and carrying out civil works such as water piping, drilling wells, and dredging canals and wells, among others.

The Volunteers Organization implemented water networks and distributed water in all corners of the affected provinces. In addition, 300 people have benefited from hygiene awareness training. The hygiene parcels are also delivered to 7,500 families based on a need-based selection process. The IRCS is the primary coordinator for water supply, purification, transportation, repairs, and continuity in all topographic areas. IRCS connects its multi-year water donation project with these areas.

## Strengthen National Society

**Outcome S1.1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical, and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
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# of volunteers deployed to this response	500	141
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**Output S1.1.1: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
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# of volunteers briefed	141	141
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# of volunteers that are trained	141	141
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### Progress towards outcomes

The volunteers have been trained in first aid skills, as well as preventive sanitation to work with the population and they were equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure their safety while on the field carrying out the planned intervention. The volunteers involved in this DREF Operation were given a thorough briefing on their rights and responsibilities, as well as an explanation of the operation's main goals and objectives. Furthermore, the volunteers have been provided with insurance and the necessary food allowance (food/water) to operate in drought and extreme heat conditions.

## International Disaster Response

**Outcome S2.1: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
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Effective and coordinated international disaster response ensured.	Yes	
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**Output S2.1.1: Effective and respected surge capacity mechanism is maintained.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
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# of expert members deployed	2	
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# of surge missions	2	
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### Progress towards outcomes

There was no need for a surge mission.

## Influence others as leading strategic partner

**Output S3.1.2: IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming.**

Indicators:	Target	Actual
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# of PMER monitoring visits	8	
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# of Lessons Learned Workshop	1	
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### Progress towards outcomes

There is no designated PMER staff or focal point in either the IFRC delegation or the IRCS. The work is being carried out by available field staff with technical support from the Regional IFRC MENA PMER.

The IFRC, ICRC, and IRCS are finalizing a 6- to 9-month PMER joint consultancy. ToRs have been finalized. IFRC and IRCS launched joint promotional/influential/resource mobilization efforts at the country level. In the same context, IFRC/IRCS communicated with EU/ECHO/UN Pillar/Embassies missions and public authorities about the drought Emergency Appeal. The preliminary qualitative findings of the surge mission report were shared with all stakeholders. Presentations were given to the UN Resident Coordinator, a UNOCHA representative, the ECHO Director, and a Brussels-based EU delegation. The IFRC PRD at the regional delegation are now connecting leads with global and regional files for already-implemented country-level resource-raising efforts.

## Effective, credible and accountable IFRC

***Output S4.1.3: Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders:***

Indicators:		Target	Actual
# of narrative and financial reports		3	

### **Progress towards outcomes**

Because the IRCS support services system is engaged in multiple crisis responses, financial reporting is delayed. As a result, an IFRC newly recruited admin finance officer in the Iran delegation is being trained while also providing assistance to peers in the IRCS System. Three management-level meetings have been organized, with assistance from the MENA IFRC RO (Finance), the treasury general, and the DGs of credit, finance, and accounts. The working advance system vs cash transfer system has been explained, and the National Society self-assessment for the cash transfer system is currently underway.

## D. Financial Report

The operating budget and response activities remain unchanged. The financial report will be included in the final report.



**Iran-Drought  
Disaster Relief Emergency Funds**  
*July - 2021*



## Reference documents



Click here for:

- Previous [Appeals](#) and updates
- [Emergency Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)

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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 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.