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DREF final report Argentina: floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRAR007
GLIDE n° [ST-2013-000035-ARG](#)
8 May 2014

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 Red Crescent response to emergencies. 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.

Summary: 299,892 Swiss francs have been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 9,600 beneficiaries.

On the night of 2 April 2013, a severe local storm brought nearly 400 mm of rainfall in a 24-hour period and resulted in heavy flooding in La Plata, the capital of the Buenos Aires province. Flooding affected over 350,000 people, caused 52 deaths and led to 3,000 evacuations.

The Argentine Red Cross planned and used DREF funds to provide support to more than 1,600 families which were severely affected by the disaster in seven neighbourhoods in La Plata (Tolosa, Ringuele, San Carlos, La Loma, Los Hornos, Altos de San Lorenzo and Villa Elvira). The DREF support to the response plan of the Argentine Red Cross included the distribution of relief items through a Cash Transfer Programme (CTP), hygiene promotion campaigns and psychosocial support. More than 317 volunteers from 22 local branches of the Argentine Red Cross had participated actively during the implementation of activities, especially during those related to hygiene promotion and psychosocial support. The IFRC delegates supported the Argentine Red Cross from the beginning of the operation with the use of the Open Data Kit (ODK) Registration System, Mega V, CTP design and implementation, as well as for the monitoring and reporting support provided by the Disaster Response, Crisis and Early Recovery Unit.



An Argentine Red Cross volunteer visits one of the areas affected by the floods. Source: Regional Reference Centre for Disaster Preparedness (CREPD)

The Argentine Red Cross and the IFRC Secretariat extend their gratitude to the Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian Government for the support provided and also to Coca Cola Foundation and the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG-ECHO) for their generous contributions to replenish the allocation made to this operation. Other major donors and partners of this DREF operation

include the Australian, American and Belgian governments, the Austrian Red Cross, the Australian Red Cross, the Danish Red Cross and Danish Government, the Irish and the Italian governments, the Japanese Red Cross, the Luxembourg Government, the Red Cross of Monaco and the Monaco Government, the Netherlands Red Cross and Netherlands Government, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Norwegian Government, the Spanish Government, the Swedish Red Cross and the Swedish Government, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Medtronic and Zurich foundations, and other corporate and private donors, whose support made possible this operation.

<http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/responding/disaster-response-system/financial-instruments/disaster-relief-emergency-fund-dref/>

[*<click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>*](#)

The situation

According to data provided by the National Meteorological Service, between 5 pm on 2 April and 9 am on 3 April, 392 mm of rain fell on the city of La Plata, the capital of the Buenos Aires province. Out of the 392 mm worth of rain, 312 mm fell within a three-hour period. The previous maximum for a 24-hour period had been 155 mm, as registered on 14 May 1980. Official figures state that 52 persons died as a result of the storm and approximately 3,000 were evacuated to 33 community shelters. In total, more than 350,000 people were affected by the storm and resulting flooding. The flooding inside certain districts of the city reached a height of more than two metres inside the homes and resulted in the disruption of the electrical network and of the potable water supply in this city of approximately one million inhabitants.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

From the onset, the Argentine Red Cross activated its Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), and deployed its volunteers to assist search-and-rescue and First Aid activities alongside the Argentine Navy, as well as for storage and distribution of aid items. In close coordination with the local authorities, the Argentine Red Cross carried out detailed damage-and-needs assessments throughout the affected areas. Twelve hours after the beginning of floods, the Argentine Red Cross had a primary care post already installed in one of the areas where people were still confined inside their houses. Immediate care was provided to more than 40 people, out of which approximately 12 had to be transferred to hospitals. Additionally, psychosocial support was provided since the beginning, addressed to the affected people and households.

Once rescue and initial care actions concluded, the Argentine Red Cross started actions to provide subsequent humanitarian aid. The National Society managed a collection centre for donations of essential items provided by individuals (reception, classification and distribution). More than 3,000 tonnes of donated items were distributed to nearly 100,000 people in 900 dispatches in seven most affected neighbourhoods in La Plata (Tolosa, Ringuélet, San Carlos, La Loma, Los Hornos, Altos de San Lorenzo and Villa Elvira). The DREF funds have not been used for the distribution of the donated items.

To support the response of the Argentine Red Cross, the IFRC Secretariat deployed a disaster manager and a cash transfer officer to assist the National Society in the development of a plan of action, monitoring and reporting, as well as to support the implementation of a cash transfer activity. An innovation officer was also deployed to train on beneficiary registration and distribution techniques using ODK and Mega V electronic devices for efficient information management. For the implementation of the CTP, the American Red Cross in coordination with the IFRC Secretariat deployed a Cash Transfer Programme RIT to support the National Society with the identification of suppliers and CTP design and implementation. As a result, the Argentine Red Cross was able to provide aid through the delivery of humanitarian aid cards worth 200 US dollars each for 1,100 families, for the purchase of food and hygiene supplies.

The Argentine Red Cross created a local management structure to coordinate the implementation of the plan of action, complementing the field organization scheme with a local project coordinator, a

local technical officer and an administrative and finance officer, all of them in close coordination through a national coordinator appointed at the headquarters' level. Two of these positions, the local project coordinator and the technical officer, were supported by the DREF.

Throughout the flooding operation, more than 300 volunteers were involved. These volunteers were from the Argentine Red Cross branches of La Plata, Concepción del Uruguay, Corrientes, Chacabuco, Chivilcoy, Lomas de Zamora, Lujan, Mar Del Plata, Necochea, Quilmes, Saavedra, San Juan, San Nicolas, San Pedro, Santa Fe, Holy Places, Tandil, Vicente López, Villa Crespo, Villa Dominico, Villa Gesell and Zarate.

It is worth mentioning that Argentine Red Cross has based this operation on institutional capacities and the support provided by the Red Cross Movement and important partners, as well as on inter-institutional coordination with a wide range of non-governmental organizations and representatives of the municipal, provincial and national governments, as well as with the inhabitants and neighbourhood associations in the country.

During the operations, the Argentine Red Cross made extensive use of communication tools to inform about the situation, and explain its plan of action and the impact of activities. Three videos and an audio-visual presentation on the context, the plan of action and the impact of the emergency were produced. These videos were disseminated on the social networks (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube). Among these, a six-minute-long audio-visual material was also presented and disseminated. To find it, please refer to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJ7t-s6SOMg&feature=c4overview&list=UUBI4pKwyDhsN9kgy7eo4I5w>

Apart from the DREF funds, important efforts were made by the Argentine Red Cross to gather additional funds: the National Society organized a fundraising campaign that was released on the following website: www.cruzroja.org.ar/new/donaciones/individuo.php. Donation mechanisms included bank deposits, online donations and credit cards, which allowed raising 297,933.23 US dollars.

The fundraising campaigns complemented IFRC's DREF funds as follows:



Achievements against outcomes

The funds allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Emergency Fund (DREF) contributed to the National Society's response plan in delivering immediate assistance through cash transfers to 1,100 affected families as well as carrying out hygiene promotion awareness campaigns and psychosocial support to some 9,600 people severely affected by the disaster in seven most affected neighbourhoods.

Outcome 1: Relief distributions

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)			
Outcome: 1,000 affected families in La Plata will benefit from the provision of essential food and non-food items to alleviate the effects of the emergency	Output		% of Achievement
		1,000 families in La Plata are able to purchase needed kitchen and hygiene items	
Activities	Is implementation on time?		% progress
	Yes	No	
Develop a beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance	x		100
Detailed damage and needs survey conducted at household level	x		100
Agreements established with local business owners	x		100
Vouchers designed and printed	x		100
Distribution of vouchers	x		100
Monitoring of voucher exchange with merchants	x		100
Monitoring of the procurement of items by beneficiaries	x		100
Payment to merchants	x		100

Impact: A total of 1,100 families that had severe losses during the floods were able to purchase the type of food and home articles necessary for their specific needs through a successful Cash Transfer Programme.

After the initial assessments carried out during the first hours, further assessments were performed by the stakeholders at the household level to better ascertain needs and prioritize targeted neighbourhoods. A beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance to families was developed. The detailed damage-and-needs survey conducted at the household level made possible the prioritization of target neighbourhoods which received humanitarian support in La Plata: Tolosa, Ringuiele, San Carlos, La Loma, Los Hornos, Altos de San Lorenzo and Villa Elvira. These assessments led to a distribution of the areas among stakeholders according to the needs assessed and the expertise of the partners. The neighbourhood Villa Elvira was targeted to participate in IFRC's DREF Cash Transfer Programme. It was the first time that this programme (already tested in some other Americas' countries by IFRC) was performed by the Argentine Red Cross.

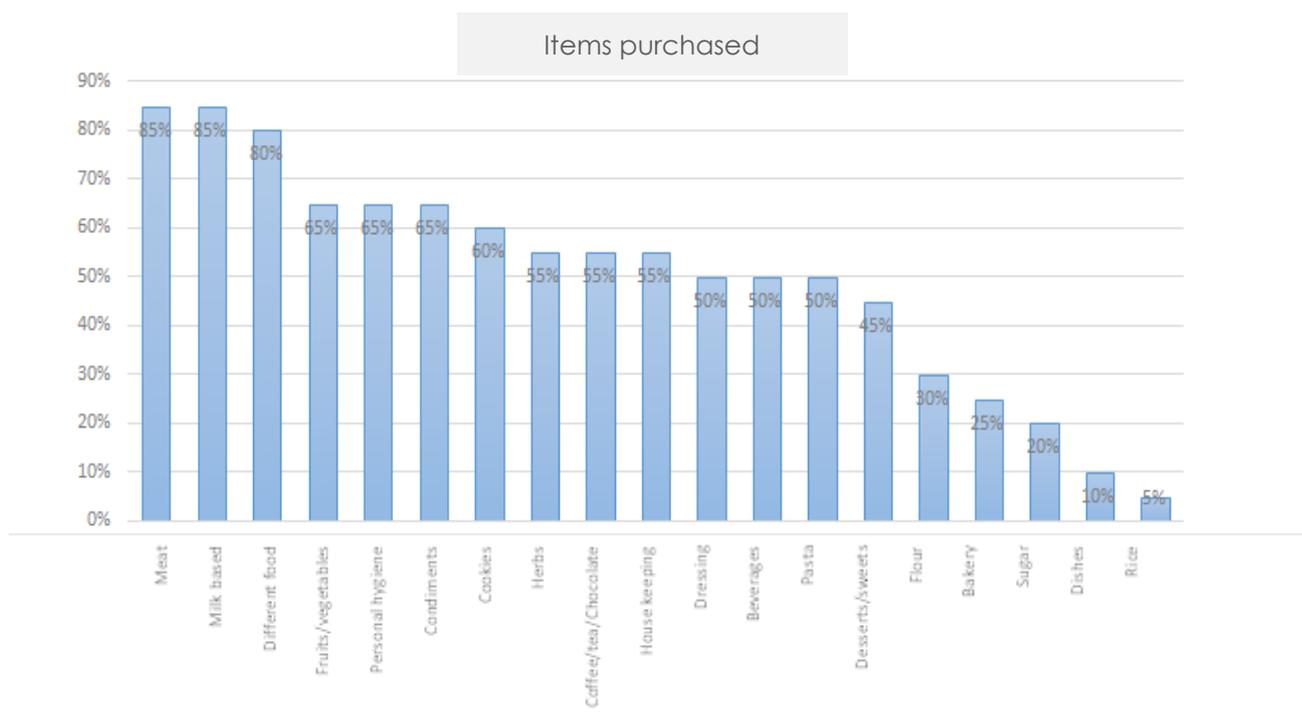


In La Plata, 1,552 families were surveyed using the ODK system (between streets 90-96, route 11 and Calle 13) and among these, 1,100 families were selected to attend to their immediate specific needs (food, clothing, basic commodities) through a flexible Cash Transfer Programme (electronic cash vouchers exchangeable for merchandise). This amounted to 100 families more than initially planned, as Cencosud—the company directly involved in the CTP—generously donated the 100 extra cash vouchers. The DREF operation supported the purchase of equipment (ten tablets) needed to complete the ODK assessment, and volunteers and staff received training on their use.

Related to the agreements established with local businesses and stores, the vouchers were distributed through Cencosud S.A. and affiliated stores: Jumbo, Disco, Easy, Vea and Blaisten. With these cards, every beneficiary family received 1,000 Argentine pesos (equivalent to about 200 US dollars) to purchase essential items for families (alcoholic beverages were not allowed). A call centre was made available by Cencosud to answer beneficiaries' questions about the card. The Argentine Red Cross also enabled a cell phone number to answer questions related to the operation. At least 3,000 calls and more than 2,000 text messages were received until mid-September. Most of the calls received were from non-targeted people requesting information on how to get this service. During distribution, a total of 41 inquiries were also solved (involving errors in the national identification number, names, etc.). Thirty volunteers participated in this activity and received the support from the police who ensured safety during the distribution.

Although it was initially planned that the cash transfer will be used for purchasing kitchen and hygiene items, in the end a more flexible approach was taken, allowing the beneficiaries to decide what their priorities were.

The operation was closely monitored including post surveys with a small sample of beneficiaries to assess the type of purchase done and the quality of the solution. It showed that the beneficiaries surveyed considered that the process was well conducted, easy, fast and more practical as they could choose what to buy according to their specific needs. As shown in the graphic below, the most common items were meat and milk-based foods.



Challenges:

The main challenge, related to the Cash Transfer Programme, stemmed from its novelty. Since it was the first time it was implemented in Argentina by the Argentine Red Cross, the American Red Cross provided support through a RIT member to identify and implement the Cash Transfer Programme, which was positively valued both internally by the National Society and externally by the community.

The management of branch volunteers and new volunteers who joined the Argentine Red Cross in the early hours of the emergency was also a challenge because of their lack of familiarity with the area and their little or no institutional experience in disasters. To account for this, the Argentine Red Cross carried out induction sessions for all volunteers at the beginning and during the implementation of the

project. Despite challenges, at the same time this situation strengthened the La Plata branch which can now count on an enlarged volunteering base, for a greater outreach to vulnerable areas.

Outcome 2: Hygiene promotion and psychosocial support

Emergency health			
Outcome: Psychosocial support is provided to children and family members in the affected areas, in order to increase their resilience and coping mechanisms.	Outputs		% of Achievement
	1,600 affected families participate in psychosocial support activities and receive hygiene promotion material.		100
	4,000 children are able to return to school and continue their recovery process.		0
Activities	Is implementation on time?		% progress
	Yes	No	
Volunteer teams are formed and trained to provide psychosocial support and hygiene promotion activities to affected families.	x		100
Carry out psychosocial support and hygiene promotion campaigns to affected groups.	x		100
Distribute a total of 400 school kits to four schools.		x	0

Impact: A total of 5,677 adults and 835 children received psychosocial support after the floods in La Plata, while 1,500 people participated in health promotion activities. These persons were members of the families assisted in La Plata with relief items, either with the gift card or with donations collected locally.¹

A total of 5,677 people were reached with different **psychosocial support (PSS) strategies**. This figure was reached by mobilizing a technical team from the Argentine Red Cross headquarters to provide support to the local teams during the primary response and after the emergency phase; the technical team also performed interviews, received phone calls, and implemented activities in the affected neighbourhoods. These activities were done by volunteers from different branches of the Argentine Red Cross and carried out using different methods, as follows:

Villa Elvira / Activity	People reached
PSS door-to-door during the first days of the emergency	39
PSS walk in the most affected neighbourhoods	90
PSS and restoring family links during emergency	8
PSS during the delivery of humanitarian aid card (beneficiaries' as well as non-beneficiaries' requests were included)	1,750
PSS in public awareness activities	2,300
PSS - telephone calls received by the branch	590
PSS in various community activities	900
TOTAL	5,677

¹ For a table indicating the specific number of families and neighborhoods assisted please refer to the DREF bulletin.

Furthermore, 835 children participated in eight recreational activities as part of the psychological support and hygiene promotion activities, using games and puppets in Villa Elvira neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood/community/evacuation centre	Number of children participating	Average age
Villa Elvira (from 9 April to 31 May)	210	7/8 years
Villa Elvira (June) – three recreation activities	270	7/8 years
Villa Elvira (July) – four recreation activities (one with more than 50 volunteers from different Argentine Red Cross branches)	355	7/8 years
TOTAL	835	7/8 years

The **health promotion** was done through massive awareness campaigns addressed to more than 1,500 people. It was mostly implemented in La Plata, by groups of 30-50 volunteers from the different Argentine Red Cross local branches supporting the operation (Villa Crespo, Zárate, Quilmes and La Plata) and included information on community health issues. The topics of the awareness campaign were identified according to needs and by means of the vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) process. The DREF support made possible the acquisition of a tent, audio equipment, a megaphone, a generator, and a video projector for the awareness campaigns.

During these activities the Argentine Red Cross distributed about 5,000 flyers including prevention messages regarding the following:

- Acute respiratory infections;
- Dengue ("We informed");
- HIV/AIDS ("Learning to live and love in times of HIV/AIDS");
- Clean and safe water;
- Diarrhea ("It is not a game");
- Psychosocial support;
- First Aid;
- Influenza A.

The **health promotion** included community meetings in order to identify and prioritize activities in the area of intervention, two workshops with 80 people, household visits and lectures about community health and community First Aid.

Output 2: 4,000 children are able to return to school and continue their recovery process.

The activities relating to this output were cancelled because the Argentine Government took on the responsibility to provide school supplies and to repair and rehabilitate the schools. The budget allotted for this activity was redirected to increase the amount of money provided to households as gift cards and to conduct a final evaluation. The evaluation is available at the following address: <http://adore.ifrc.org/Download.aspx?FileId=54195>.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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

- **In IFRC Zone:** Jennie Trow, relationship management and accountability coordinator; email: jennie.trow@ifrc.org

DREF history:

- This DREF was initially allocated on 12 April 2013 for 299,892 Swiss francs for three months to assist 9,600 beneficiaries.
- A DREF operation update was issued on 12 July 2013.



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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](#) 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.

Disaster Response Financial Report

MDRAR007 - Argentina - Floods

Timeframe: 11 Apr 13 to 11 Jul 13

Appeal Launch Date: 11 Apr 13

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2013/4-2014/2	Programme	MDRAR007
Budget Timeframe	2013/4-7	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
A. Budget		299,892				299,892	
B. Opening Balance							
Income							
<u>Other Income</u>							
<i>DREF Allocations</i>		299,892				299,892	
C4. Other Income		299,892				299,892	
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)		299,892				299,892	
D. Total Funding = B +C		299,892				299,892	

* Funding source data based on information provided by the donor

II. Movement of Funds

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
B. Opening Balance							
C. Income		299,892				299,892	
E. Expenditure		-277,542				-277,542	
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		22,350				22,350	

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Subsector:	*		

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III. Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability		
	A					B	A - B	
BUDGET (C)			299,892			299,892		
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	69,894						69,894	
Teaching Materials	17,241		11,315			11,315	5,925	
Utensils & Tools	65,234						65,234	
Other Supplies & Services	61,507						61,507	
Cash Disbursement			200,677			200,677	-200,677	
Total Relief items, Construction, Sup	213,876		211,992			211,992	1,884	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicles Costs	2,796		2,741			2,741	55	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	2,796		2,741			2,741	55	
Personnel								
International Staff	10,251						10,251	
National Society Staff	11,947		14,423			14,423	-2,475	
Volunteers	8,611		5,664			5,664	2,947	
Total Personnel	30,809		20,087			20,087	10,722	
Consultants & Professional Fees								
Consultants			2,788			2,788	-2,788	
Total Consultants & Professional Fee			2,788			2,788	-2,788	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	3,728		5,894			5,894	-2,167	
Total Workshops & Training	3,728		5,894			5,894	-2,167	
General Expenditure								
Travel	13,979		11,526			11,526	2,452	
Information & Public Relations	6,523		3,799			3,799	2,725	
Office Costs	4,194		8,670			8,670	-4,476	
Communications	3,728		654			654	3,074	
Financial Charges	1,957		-7,601			-7,601	9,558	
Other General Expenses			53			53	-53	
Total General Expenditure	30,381		17,100			17,100	13,280	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Services Support Recove	18,303		16,939			16,939	1,364	
Total Indirect Costs	18,303		16,939			16,939	1,364	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	299,892		277,542			277,542	22,350	
VARIANCE (C - D)			22,350			22,350		

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Budget Timeframe	2013/4-7	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

IV. Breakdown by subsector

Business Line / Sub-sector	Budget	Opening Balance	Income	Funding	Expenditure	Closing Balance	Deferred Income
BL2 - Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people							
Disaster response	299,892		299,892	299,892	277,542	22,350	
Subtotal BL2	299,892		299,892	299,892	277,542	22,350	
GRAND TOTAL	299,892		299,892	299,892	277,542	22,350	