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DREF Final Report

Ecuador: Penitentiary unrest

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF Operation	Operation n° MDREC017
Date of issue: 1 November 2022	Glide n°: N/A
Operation start date: 20 November 2021	Operation end date: 30 April 2022
Host National Society Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC)	Operation budget: 49,921 Swiss francs (CHF)
Total number of people affected: 15,865 people in Guayas, Azuay, Los Ríos, and Cotopaxi.	Number of people assisted: Directly reached: 1,542 people Indirectly reached: 1,139,367 people
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC) has a presence in 24 provinces of Ecuador represented by 24 provincial branches and 83 cantonal branches. It has 7,000 volunteers registered in the national database and 200 staff specialized in different lines of action.	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have been supporting as key allies for monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up during the evolution of the emergency from February 2021 to the present.	
The Ecuadorian Red Cross spent a total of 38,129 CHF. The remaining balance of 11,792 CHF will be returned to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund.	
<i>The major donors and partners of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, as well as DG ECHO, Blizzard Entertainment, Mondelez International Foundation, Fortive Corporation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Ecuadorian RC, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.</i>	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Ecuador is experiencing a serious prison crisis of a structural nature characterized by unprecedented levels of violence within prisons. In 2021, a total of 329 prison inmates were killed in clashes between organized crime gangs in various prisons across the country; the highest number of deaths recorded among the prison population in the history of Ecuador.

There was a marked decrease in the frequency of incidents of unrest in the country's prisons between November 2021, when the Emergency Plan of Action for this DREF operation was published, and 31 January 2022, particularly in the targeted provinces of Guayas, Cotopaxi, Los Rios and Azuay, a situation that could have rapidly changed.

Authorities reported sporadic, although isolated, cases of violence during the timeframe of this Plan of Action. During a government minister's visit to the prison on 28 December 2021, riot alerts were triggered by protests among the prison population due to the increase in COVID-19 cases. While the state of emergency in the prison system ended that same day (28 December 2021), the armed forces continued to provide security and support to the National Police outside penitentiaries.

As part of this DREF operation, the Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC) continuously monitored violence within the prison system and related crime rates including turf wars, settling of scores related to micro-trafficking, clashes between organized criminal gangs, and increase in robberies resulting in death which indicated higher levels of violence in popular urban sectors (streets, neighbourhoods, restaurants, shopping malls) in Guayas.

This operation was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the arrival of the Omicron variant in Ecuador in early 2022. While no data from official sources exist, the high levels of COVID-19 infections in prisons were mainly attributed to the overcrowded conditions and limited prison infrastructure. As of 22 September 2021, according to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 93 per cent of the prison population nationwide had been vaccinated and 7 per cent had refused the vaccine.

Summary of the current response

Overview of Host National Society Response Action.

Ecuadorian Red Cross, as an auxiliary to public authorities in humanitarian matters, conducts and implements support activities in various spaces. This includes in the national health system providing care to the injured and psycho-emotionally affected population, and in the ECU 911 national security system through permanent monitoring of the evolution of the emergency and of human rights coordination groups linked to promoting respect and dignified treatment of all those involved. In line with Fundamental Principles, the ERC conducts autonomous interventions that ensure the public's perception of the National Society's independence, neutrality, and impartiality.

For this operation, the ERC activated a total of 200 volunteers and staff in all four provinces affected by this crisis, received ongoing support and guidance from 19 national technicians at its national headquarters and placed nine ambulances on alert. Between November 2021 and April 2022, the activities implemented by Provincial Boards with technical support from national headquarters focused on:

- Coordinating with focal points from each partner institution.
- Establishing channels of information to obtain family contact information, to follow up on cases requiring psychosocial support (PSS) or restoring of family links (RFL) services.
- Providing pre-hospital care (PHS) to prison inmates for injuries sustained during previous confrontations.
- Establishing work and training dates for personnel responsible for prisons, such as prison guides, national police, among others.

- Crafting the Contingency Plan for Prison Crises in the Guayas Provincial Board.

The ERC promoted spaces for national-level coordination and work with relevant institutions such as the ECU 911 security system and authorities from the National Service for Comprehensive Care to Adults Deprived of Liberty and Adolescent Offenders (SNAI, for its Spanish acronym). This allowed establishing high-level agreements and securing authorizations for institutional work at the local level, promoting alternatives benefitting all parties involved.

The ERC held weekly coordination meetings and ongoing follow-ups with the national team and participating branches, thereby monitoring and sharing information on developments in prisons.

In view of this context, the Ecuadorian Red Cross requested a timeframe extension to be able to meet the indicators and targets set in the initial Plan of Action, incurring no additional costs. The granting of this extension enabled technical teams to continue their work in the field and resume coordination with key actors in each locality, and especially to respond to the emergency in April 2022 that left at least 20 people dead and more than 50 injured.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Actions in country.

Through its team in Ecuador, the IFRC monitored and assisted with the implementation of this DREF operation. The IFRC office in Ecuador, together with the Andean Country Cluster Delegation in Peru and the IFRC Americas Regional Office, provided support through technical guidance on disaster management, finance, and planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER), among others.

The IFRC coordinated actions with the ICRC focal point in the country on an ongoing basis. The ERC, the ICRC and the IFRC have a tripartite agreement in force. Furthermore, the ERC received technical and financial support from the ICRC to cover operational costs stemming from the emergency response provided in the city of Guayaquil in September. This support was reconfirmed for the RFL line in the medium-term intervention.

At the end of the project, the ICRC, the IFRC and the ERC jointly implemented a hybrid (both in-person and remotely) Operational Security Workshop in the country.

Overview of non-RCRC actors' actions in country.

Several state institutions responded to the prison crisis, the most relevant of which include:

- **Office of the President of the Republic of Ecuador:** Coordination between different ministries.
- **Government Ministry:** Coordination with National Police, the Ministry of Defence and SNAI.
- **National Police:** Oversight through operations in prisons and permanent activation of the security protocol.
- **Criminalistics Unit:** Inspection and identification of human remains, DNA and other genetic samples.
- **National Defence Ministry:** Oversight in prisons, in collaboration with the National Police.
- **Public Health Ministry:** Provision of outpatient and hospital care services.
- **Human Rights Secretariat:** Management of donations from the private sector.
- **National Service for Comprehensive Care to Adults Deprived of Liberty and Adolescent Offenders (SNAI):** Strengthening of programmes centred on productive activities that contribute to inmate rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as coordination and oversight of periodic operations and records of the deprived of liberty people.

The Provincial Technical Response Team in Guayas coordinated local-level activities with local actors such as the Undersecretariat for Human Rights, the Guayaquil Judicial Police, Guayaquil Municipality, SNAI, the Human Rights Commission, the Zone 8 Risk Management Secretariat, and the Zone 8 Public Health Ministry.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

In terms of needs analysis, no revisions were made to service-related lines of action; therefore, the National Society maintained what was identified and presented in the initial plan, as follows:

Psychosocial support (PSS):

- Provide emotional support services to families of injured or deceased prison inmates using contact information provided by the country's prison authorities.
- Provide emotional relief services to prison system workers, especially from SNAI, through group or individual sessions according to need; as well as to their families and friends considering the psycho-emotional impact that the emergency had on their daily lives. It is important to mention that the need to work with ERC institutional staff on a permanent basis was also identified.
- Adjust the care system, going from in-person to virtual through video calls considering the provisions issued by the National EOC in response to the COVID-19 health crisis.

Pre-hospital care

- Provide follow-up services to cases involving inmates as well as treating inmates injured during prison clashes in October and November.
- Provide support to the Ministry of Public Health through care services and transport of prison inmates to health centres, considering that health system outpatient units are filled to capacity due to the health crisis in the country.

Communication

The ERC, as an actor supporting response to the prison emergency, raised public awareness regarding the importance of the Red Cross emblem and role of the National Society as a humanitarian actor, whose actions, at all times and in all the circumstances, were based on the Movement's Fundamental Principles, especially humanity, impartiality, and independence. The ERC provided crisis management training to communication focal points as well as guidance as necessary.

Security

Throughout the intervention, the ERC adjusted the number of people participating in the in-person operational security workshop, so as to comply with national EOC provisions regarding capacity as well as with costs submitted by suppliers for use and access to services in hotels that fulfilled biosafety requirements for the event.

Restoring family links (RFL)

RFL teams were kept on alert throughout the intervention; however, this service was not requested and therefore not activated.

Operation Risk Assessment

The sharp uptick in COVID-19 cases seen in the first weeks of December led to the suspension of family visits to prisons. The fear of new protests arose given the strong emotional load for inmates and their families associated with the month of December.

As mentioned above, the restrictions implemented to deal with the increase in the number of COVID-19 cases generally affected in-person activities contained in the Plan, with two effects:

- Increased implementation costs, as more meetings with fewer people were organized, which logistically forced staff to be deployed more often.

- Replacing in-person activities with remote ones, which prevented executing budget allocated to covering snacks and/or food for personnel targeted by the activities.


Several challenges were faced during processes to procure equipment, infrastructure, and necessary materials, e.g., suppliers refused to work with long-term pro forma invoices because they could not guarantee that either the prices or stock could be maintained. This affected the purchased of PPE kits as they took longer than expected to acquire given the high demand of such supplies in the country.

B. Operational strategy

Proposed strategy

As planned, both the Provincial Boards and Headquarters maintained ongoing coordination between technical teams through weekly meetings with counterparts in the health and prison systems, in order to revise or plan support and care activities. Despite that no violence was reported in the prison system in the four provinces between January and March 2022, local teams remained on alert in case a request for assistance arrived from the ECU 911 system. In April 2022, the ERC deployed its teams to respond to the emergency in Azuay province

C. Detailed Operational Plan

	<p>Health</p> <p>People reached: 1,542 people</p> <p>Male: 864 people</p> <p>Female: 678 people</p>	
Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with health services	930	1,542
# of people reached with healthcare and pre-hospital care	100	238
# of people who received psychosocial support	830	1,304
# of affected people reached with psychosocial support services	590	924
# of Red Cross and external personnel served	240	380
Narrative description of achievements		
<p><u>Pre-hospital care</u></p> <p>ERC pre-hospital care to the affected population</p> <p>The ERC's pre-hospital care system is part of the Integrated Security System (SIS ECU 911), the institution responsible for handling incidents and coordinating and dispatching operational resources to the field to respond to emergencies, utilizing video surveillance and alert systems available to this end.</p> <p>The ERC Ambulance and Pre-hospital Medicine System provided services to 238 people (77.7 per cent male, 22.3 per cent female), addressing trauma/injuries/falls, medical emergencies (including penetrating trauma, burns, wounds, and haemorrhages), intoxications, and gynaecological-obstetrics issues. Throughout the emergency operation, the risk of exposure for ambulance response team personnel (paramedics, drivers, ambulance assistants) was considered at all times. The training process focusing on security in this type of context was developed in coordination with the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values National Programme, implementing tools such as risk analysis, probabilities, scenarios, and the need for deployment to support the relevant state institutions responsible for deploying the necessary resources for patient care. Cleanliness and disinfection standards were maintained given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.</p>		

People's care and assessments were carried out from the Provincial Boards. No prison riots or crises were reported between November 2021 and March 2022. Violence was reported among prison inmates in Cuenca in early April, for which the Azuay Provincial Board organized a response plan in coordination with institutions linked to SIS ECU 911. Operating expenses related to patient care, such as fuel for emergency vehicles and meals for response teams, were covered using Plan of Action funds.

Below is a summary table of the PSS services delivered by Provincial Boards.

Provincial Board	Locality	Number of services provided
Azuay	Centro de Rehabilitación Social Turi	72
Cotopaxi	CRS Sierra Centro	38
Guayas	Penitenciaría del Litoral	84
Los Ríos	Los Ríos	44
Total		238

Number of services provided by age group:

By age group	Number of services
13 - 17 years	1
18 - 29 years	89
30 - 39 years	75
40 - 49 years	41
50 - 59 years	19
60 - 69 years	10
70 - 79 years	1
Unspecified	2
Total	238

Provision of pre-hospital care material and supplies

A high percentage of the injuries seen during emergencies in prisons involved penetrating wounds, haemorrhages, and skull, chest, abdominal and pelvic trauma. ERC workers from the four provincial boards (Azuay, Cotopaxi, Guayas, and Los Ríos) were provided with materials, supplies, devices and biomedical equipment (among the most important are bleeding control kits that includes haemostatic gauze, black tourniquet, Israeli bandage, titanium scissors, thermal blanket, chest patch, nitrile gloves for patient handling, six semi-rigid immobilizing splint kits and helmets) to treat these kinds of injuries.

Response team personnel underwent the academic professional training processes required to use the supplies acquired with funds allocated to this DREF Plan of Action. It is important to emphasize that the kits were complemented with other biomedical equipment, materials, supplies and devices available in Provincial Board emergency vehicles, to deliver the quality care that patients require.

The procurement process was carried out in line with guidelines established by the National Society through the purchasing department.

Ambulance visibility was one of the elements considered as part of the security approach. The ERC placed its logo on three ambulances in order to have properly marked and identified vehicles.



Ambulance located at the Guayaquil penitentiary, ERC

Humanitarian action awareness workshop for key external actors

The ERC organized a process to raise awareness regarding the Red Cross' humanitarian actions aimed at representatives of the main institutions with which emergency response to violence in prisons was coordinated. Three provinces participated (Guayas, Cotopaxi, Los Ríos), including actors such as the National Police, Armed Forces IESS, Ministry of Public Health, SIS ECU 911, Firefighters (Guayaquil, Azuay), SNAI, Human Rights Secretariat, and the State Attorney General's Office.

A three-day awareness-raising workshop, held remotely, dealt with topics such as the Movement's role as an auxiliary to state authorities, the Fundamental Principles, and important aspects regarding laws and regulations on the protection and use of the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblem. Participants shared operational experiences and expectations regarding the Red Cross' role during prison crises as well as final reflections and commitments.

Each Provincial Board (Cotopaxi, Guayas, and Los Ríos) organized its own cadre of facilitators, and the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values National Coordination and the GRED National Coordination were responsible for the corresponding follow-up and sending the invitations to the institutions' representatives to the activity's actual implementation.

The COVID-19 health crisis and related restrictions made it necessary to hold activities and conferences remotely, via Zoom, to reduce the risk of infection for both ERC staff and staff of institutions linked to the emergency response system.



Images: Workshop organized by the Cotopaxi Provincial Board.



Image: Invitation to the workshop.

The workshop in Azuay could not be held, as members of relief institutions, including ERC's Provincial Board in Azuay, were engaged in responding to emergencies caused by the winter season in Nabon canton and the prison riot in the El Turi prison in early April.

Activity summary

Provincial Board	Number of Participants	Date of activity	Modality
Azuay	0	N/A	Not held
Cotopaxi	12	25 March 2022	Virtual
Guayas	109	18 March 2022	Virtual
Los Ríos	30	25 March 2022	Virtual
Total	151		

Establishing security procedures for PSS staff and volunteers

Three procedures had been previously conducted by the GRED National Coordination and the PSS technical line:

- Care during emergency situations.
- Secondary transport of patients.
- Patient care in social mobilization contexts.

The Prison Crisis context gave rise to the need to adapt a document that encompassed the main guidelines for action by response team personnel during this type of adverse event. To craft a specific document, including the security component, the ERC analysed existing documents and gathered the experiences gained during the first events in Guayaquil and Cuenca. The document was prepared jointly in February and March via virtual technical meetings with all four pre-hospital care focal points from the Provincial Boards in Azuay, Cotopaxi, Guayas, and Los Ríos, two Emergency and Disaster Risk Management Provincial Coordinators from Pichincha and Guayas, and the national ERC PSS technician.

The document was structured as follows:

- Preparation – General aspects to consider, such as operational risk analysis, probability of occurrence and relevance of response to emergency situations in this context, considering the auxiliary role to state authorities.
- Reporting of event – Adequate mechanisms for gathering information and creating safe contexts for Red Cross personnel, based on analysis of the information gathered and on classification of the emergency level (low, medium, high).

- Response Teams – Assessment of security on site to provide emergency care, establishment of guidelines for technical delivery of care.
- Incident management – Assessment of situations that may potentially arise within a PSS care context, emphasizing operational safety and safer access, emotional relief processes, and health care and medical care.
- Information Management – Recommendations for communicating ERC's actions during Prison Crises.

Psychosocial support

The ERC considered it necessary to expand beneficiary selection criteria to include the relatives of personnel linked to the prison system (guides, forensics, criminalistics, among others), who were also directly affected during the unrest. This decision was taken following coordination meetings in which prison system authorities made clear the need to move forward with this activity, and their interest in doing so, for the emotional stability of staff and their families.

Following a needs analysis, the ERC identified:

- The lack of a protocol for providing sensitive information to inmates' families when violent events occur, such as those that occurred in the country.
- The need for a psychosocial support team in emergencies made up of professionals able to technically manage emotional crises, as well as adequate spaces to deliver care to people in need of it, including office equipment.
- The importance of working with staff of agencies responsible for oversight, such as prisons, to provide them with basic psychological first aid training to reduce the adverse effects on relatives when delivering bad news. These trainings were adjusted to be delivered remotely because of the increase in COVID-19 cases and the guidelines established by national authorities to reduce such cases.
- The importance of providing psychosocial care to prison staff because of the emotional stress generated by riots.
- The need for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) lines and RFL teams to work jointly, considering their objectives and focus on serving cases with specific characteristics.

MHPSS actions were provided to 1,304 individuals (52.1 per cent male, 47.9 per cent female). Police officers, members of the military and prison guides, as well as ERC provincial board staff, were among the population targeted by this activity. The following two tables summarize the number of people reached disaggregated by sex and age.

SITE	Azuay		Cotopaxi		Guayas		Los Ríos		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
# of affected people reached with psychosocial support services ¹	34	42	158	111	246	239	78	16	924
# of Red Cross staff and volunteers reached with psychosocial support services ²	23	17	14	10	123	180	3	10	380
Total	57	59	172	121	369	419	81	26	

AGE	Azuay	Cotopaxi	Guayas	Los Ríos	Total
0 - 5					0
6 - 12		2			2
13 - 17		1	2		3
18 - 29	57	126	349	86	618
30 - 39	38	120	238	9	405
40 - 49	13	20	120	9	162
50 - 59	7	14	52	2	75

¹ Affected population in general (relatives of inmates).

² Personnel from Ecuadorian Red Cross

60 - 69	1	6	26		33
70 - 79		4	1	1	6
TOTAL	116	293	788	107	1,304

The ERC exceeded the target for number of people reached with psychosocial services by 57 per cent. This is attributed to: 1) greater demand for services in Cotopaxi province, as it hosts one of the main prisons in the country and saw a considerable increase in care to affected people and external personnel; 2) increase in target population because of inclusion of prison guards' families; and 3) greater demand for services from ERC personnel, mainly in Guayas province.

Results analysis in targeted provinces showed a prevalence of anxiety and depression, although not in alarming percentages. The psychologists identified the need to work on the anxiety and depression manifested by civil servants.

Four tents (two in Guayas, one in Azuay and one Cotopaxi), office equipment (tables, chairs, screens, water dispensers, fans, glasses, lamps, among others) for Guayas, Azuay and Cotopaxi and megaphones (two in Guayas, one in Azuay and one in Cotopaxi) were purchased to properly deliver MHPSS services. In addition, the four target provinces received biosafety equipment (liquid soap with caps, alcohol gel and KN95 masks) for both staff and beneficiaries, which were distributed as described in the following table.

#	Materials	Provinces				
		Guayas	Azuay	Cotopaxi	Los Ríos	Total
1	Tent with institutional logo	2	1	1	0	4
2	Folding table	4	2	2	0	8
3	Folding chair	16	8	8	0	32
4	Screen	4	2	2		8
5	Hot/cold water dispenser	2	1	1	0	4
6	Pedestal fan	4	0	0	0	4
7	6 oz. disposable cups	500	250	250	0	1,000
8	Megaphones	2	1	1	0	4
9	Surge suppressor	2	1	1	0	4
10	Reel extension	2	1	1	0	4
11	100W portable led light flashlight reflector lamp	2	1	1	0	4
12	Liquid soap with flip flop cap	585	142	66	37	830
13	Alcohol gel 70%, alcohol bottle 150 ml	585	142	66	37	830
14	KN95 masks	1,170	290	140	80	1,680

MHPSS Workshops

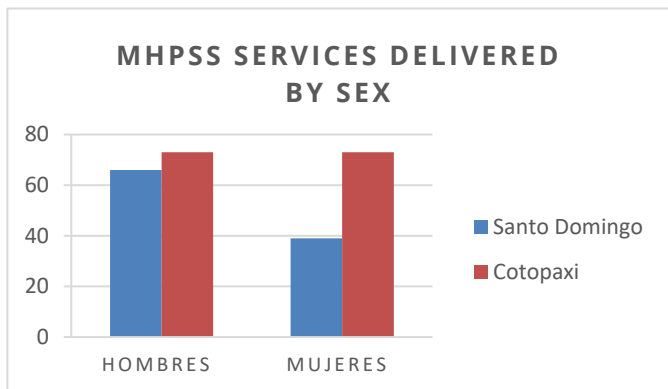
To strengthen and support the response system for this type of situation, the Provincial Boards' PSS staff delivered two workshops on tools for responder mental health care and self-care, stress management and psychoeducation. These workshops were held in person and aimed at staff from institutions linked to the prison system, to improve response and care protocols for relatives of inmates and for others who witnessed the emergency.

In addition, two workshops dealing with crisis containment, psychological first aid, responder care and self-care and psychosocial support were held in Santo Domingo and Cotopaxi. These were aimed at SNAI staff, mainly prison guides and their direct supervisors.

The workshop held in Santo Domingo was requested by the SNAI National Deputy Director for Social Rehabilitation and Reintegration, as it was considered a neutral space within the prison unrest context across

the country. This made it possible for prison guides from affected provinces to attend the workshops and benefit from psycho-emotional relief with no problems and with the necessary security.

Most prison guides attended the workshops. All individuals invited to the workshop in Santo Domingo (105) attended, while 146 out of 173 of those invited to the Cotopaxi workshop attended (84.39 per cent).



By age group	N° of participants
18 - 29 years	88
30 - 39 years	123
40 - 49 years	25
50 - 59 years	9
60 - 69 years	2
70 - 79 years	2
No data	2
TOTAL	251

Virtual workshops

To scale up the MHPSS response, the ERC saw the importance of building institutional response teams' and prison guides' capacity to provide emotional containment to prison inmates' relatives and to other actors involved in responding to the prison crisis, mostly focusing on the provinces where most riots were reported: Guayas, Azuay, Cotopaxi, and Los Ríos. Four virtual workshops on psychological first aid, community psychosocial support and responder care and self-care were held to this end, reaching 144 prison guides and 41 ERC volunteers.

Challenges

- PSS services planned for people were limited, given that no violent incidents were reported in prisons in provinces targeted by the Plan of Action (Azuay, Guayas, Los Ríos and Cotopaxi); however, the Provincial Boards made the necessary arrangements to conduct pre-hospital assessments for police, military and prison personnel and relatives.
- Increased security risks to health personnel due to the increase in violence in April. A private ambulance (non-ERC) was shot, and two members of the medical team were killed.
- During the emergency operation, incidents of violence related to prison crises were reported in other provinces such as Esmeraldas, Imbabura, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, and Chimborazo. The government's strategy had been to move inmates from one prison to another province, which increased the risk of scaling up the violence.

Lessons learned

- This is the first time that actions have been carried out in a context of violence related to prisons. It is important to conduct specialized training processes that cover security components, the mechanisms for capturing information during the reporting of the event, decision-making for safe deployment of ERC resources, and a technical patient care component. These activities must be continuous, evaluated and fed back on.
- The financial resources allocated for procurement were insufficient, considering how expensive the kit to stop bleeding is and that too few were provided to each Provincial Board to deal with the amount services that potentially could have been needed to be provided within this context.
- Training and refresher processes must be provided at all levels: operational, management and governance. The emergency operation can be put at risk if one of the three components fails to understand the actions that need to be carried out.
- Constantly test and evaluate security procedures for psychosocial support.
- Adequately and continuously follow care, operational security, and safer access procedures through theoretical and practical exercises under different scenarios.

- Strengthen inter-institutional ties in order to facilitate activities that promote well-being in prisons.
- Promote spaces where care and self-care and psychoeducation techniques can be applied.
- Strengthen personal skills for solving problems and identifying emotions.
- Establish a specific MHPSS protocol for prison crises.

National Society Strengthening

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of insured volunteers	200	200
# IFRC monitoring and support missions.	1	1
# of people indirectly reached by ERC public communication strategy	50,000	1,139,367
# of national operational security workshops.	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

Insured personnel

Insurance was activated during all response actions in prisons in which volunteer humanitarian personnel participated, making sure that individuals were protected against any event affecting their integrity, health, or life. During the process, the Movement's general insurance was activated through the IFRC to cover the 200 volunteers who participated in the operation. These records were shared with the IFRC. At this time, the ERC has insurance that provides simultaneous coverage to 8,400 volunteers involved in several types of response. In addition, this DREF provided volunteers with visibility equipment, such as t-shirts, vest, and hats.

IFRC support mission

The increase in COVID-19 infections (from both Delta and Omicron variants) in early 2022 led the government to impose measures aimed at lowering the number of cases, one of which was suspending mass face-to-face activities. The ERC, in accordance with national provisions and based on own security criteria for humanitarian personnel, suspended all face-to-face activities during the first quarter of the year except for those essential for responding to humanitarian crises.

Therefore, all activities initially planned as in-person, both for the mission and for the operational workshop, were carried out remotely. To optimize time, effort and resources, the ERC decided that the mission to speak with ERC humanitarian personnel to understand their local prison crisis contexts would be done in one single process. This led to the initiative to expand the Operational Security Workshop, allowing the IFRC to achieve greater insight into the national reality in this regard while building operational security capacity within the ERC territorial network.

Communication strategy

Communication plan actions included one with three strategic axes: the Red Cross Emblem, Red Cross Humanitarian Workers, and Community.

Pocket Guide for Emergency Response Teams:

One thousand pocket guides were prepared for spokespersons and operational personnel and sent to the provinces targeted by the project. The pocket guides were distributed through the Risk Management and Emergency and Disaster Response National Coordination as follows: 252 in Azuay; 252 in Guayas; 160 in Cotopaxi; 128 in Los Ríos; and 208 in Pichincha.

The guide's content focused on operational security, safer access, and crisis communication tips, which provided designated spokespersons and operational humanitarian personnel with a guide that enabled them to better conduct their work and to know in advance how to proceed in a crisis scenario.

Media coverage

The following reach was achieved due to the characteristics of the events that transpired during and after the prison emergency:

- Total media coverage: 8
 - TV: 2
 - Radio: 4
 - Press: 2

Media Training workshop:

One media training workshop was held with communication focal points from Provincial Boards in Azuay, Cotopaxi, Guayas, Los Ríos and Pichincha. The meeting helped to understand the level of training and knowledge of focal points and spokespersons, including on-site replicas through theoretical and practical exercises. Various topics were socialized during the workshop, such as how to be a good spokesperson, types of spokespersons, key message box, the digital ecosystem, among others.

The workshop was attended by five focal points, who in turn socialized it with different actors from their respective Provincial Boards. A total of **36 people** were trained, distributed as follows:

- Cotopaxi: 8
- Guayas: 10
- Azuay: 10
- Pichincha: 8

Red Cross Emblem campaign:

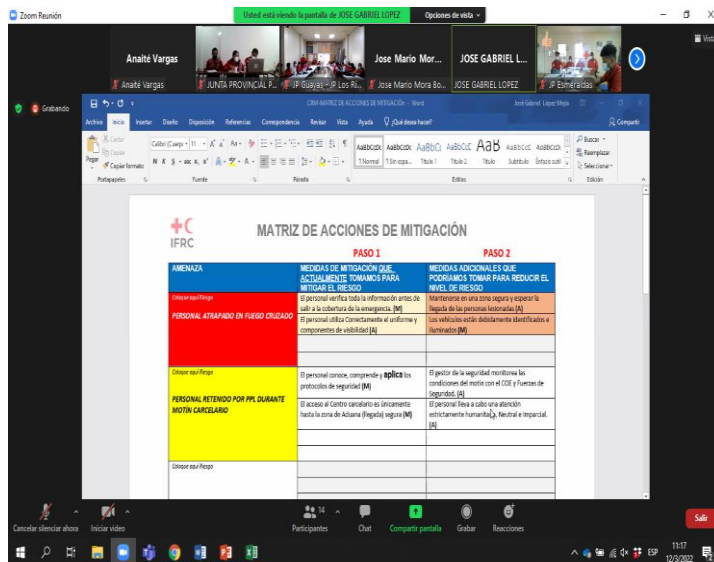
ERC posted a video on Facebook and YouTube for one month to raise the public's awareness regarding the correct use of the Red Cross Emblem, reaching 1,139,367 people. Paid advertising made it possible to reach this many people, which allowed expanding the reach while understanding the *cost benefit* in terms of the impact achieved by messages and communicational content during emergency situations. Despite the sensitive nature of the issue, ERC sought the appropriate way to convey illustrative messages regarding the Red Cross' role in this type of event. Paid advertising also allowed it to discover that sensitive issues can be strategically addressed from a communication standpoint.

- 282,325 total reproductions were obtained (both Facebook and YouTube).
- 45.48 per cent of YouTube viewers actively interacted with the video, i.e., users watched the video for more than 30 seconds.
- A total of 123.8 thousand minutes were played during the month of paid advertising.
- 573 reactions were obtained in Facebook, which means that users gave it a "Like". This allowed ERC to identify positive feedback regarding the posting.

The communication plan allowed showcasing the intervention, focusing on the affected people and not on prison violence.

ERC-IFRC-ICRC operational security workshop.

The IFRC, ERC and ICRC conducted a virtual operational security workshop, held over four two-hour sessions.



Induction sessions by Ecuadorian Red Cross.

Hybrid practical sessions were implemented, seeking to implement theoretical learning through exercises with simulated scenarios. The IFRC-ICRC facilitation team connected remotely, while participants worked, in person, on the exercises under the guidance of co-facilitators in each province.



Practical sessions at the Provincial Board in Pichincha.

Six provinces (Azuay, Cotopaxi, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Los Ríos and Pichincha) were identified and prioritized to strengthen their operational security skills. 44 individuals (21 female and 23 male) attended and successfully completed the training:

This exercise produced a roadmap of medium-, short- and long-term activities. One of the most important refers to crafting an Action Protocol for Pichincha Province, which is where Central Headquarters and Pichincha Province Board teams are based. Therefore, part of operational security is having this tool that allows a more organized articulation when it comes to responses that despite being carried out in Pichincha have a regional or national impact.

Two outputs are considered part of this process, which are currently under development:

- **Security Protocol:**
Focused on action in crises involving prisons or Social Rehabilitation Centres (CRSs), as well as Centres for Adolescent Offenders (CAIs). The Workshop provided inputs that will allow crafting a security protocol over the coming months under the leadership of the Operational Security National Coordinator.
- **Audio-visual material:**
The audio-visual material will be created following the face-to-face operational security workshop scheduled for the second half of the year. It will be based on thematic interviews with each facilitator, seeking to build

a package of audio-visual material that reinforces future training and strengthens operational security skills within the territorial network.

Challenges

Face-to-face restrictions due to the pandemic:

- This affected the planning of two important in-person activities as well as the production of the expected audio-visual output. This challenge was overcome by creating a virtual workshop, while the expected audio-visual output will be implemented by using existing virtual communication technologies.

Need for operational security expertise:

- During the DREF's implementation, it became evident that both the National Society and the territorial network needed technical personnel with expertise in operational security to provide support, guidance, and advice in this regard. It is essential to have security protocols and other tools, in writing, that clearly outline the steps to follow in situations such as those addressed in this DREF, as well as in social mobilizations, forced migrations and others. The National Society addressed this challenge by deciding to hire a National Operational Security Coordinator, with whom the challenges created by this project will be monitored.

The challenges for the Communications Department faced were that the population saw Ecuadorian Red Cross as part of the State, although it is not, and using messaging to make the public understand the institution's efforts in emergency situations, especially in a setting that was new to the ERC such as prison crises. The challenges were overcome by designing a communication plan that safeguarded the image and reputation of the institution. It also made visible the role and lines of action of the ERC, always providing clear information about the Emblem and the actions based on the Fundamental Principles. The campaign was a complete success as the messages were widely accepted by users on social media.

Lessons learned

The main lessons learned from the process include:

Comprehensiveness of the IFRC's operational security approach and the ICRC's Safer Access:

- One of the most innovative and theoretically important elements that occurred during the Security Seminar/Workshop was the 'fusing' of these two approaches during one single training process - a first in the region. The conceptual linkage developed between the ICRC and IFRC facilitation teams successfully overcame the dichotomy of having to "choose" between Operational Security and Safer Access. Above all, it strengthened the possibility of articulation between the two approaches, which are complementary when working towards achieving a safe setting for institutional operations.
- Communication plans, and generally any plan, must be regularly reviewed, updated, and socialized in order to improve implementation when responding to an event such as this one
- There is generally a high turnover among communication and management personnel, so training and periodic review of processes and methodologies need to be included into implementation strategies.
- Having an up-to-date database of operational personnel, by line of action, and a contact tree.

D. Financial Report

See annex.

Contact information

Reference documents

Click here for:

[DREF Plan of Action](#)

[DREF Operation Update](#)

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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.

DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2020/11-2022/9	Operation	MDREC017
Budget Timeframe	2021/11-2022/4	Budget	APPROVED

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared on 18/Oct/2022

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDREC017 - Ecuador - Penitentiary Unrest

Operating Timeframe: 20 Nov 2021 to 30 Apr 2022

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	49,921
DREF Allocations	49,921
Expenditure	-38,129
Closing Balance	11,792

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods			0
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash			0
PO04 - Health	29,606	22,891	6,715
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery			0
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			0
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	29,606	22,891	6,715
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships	9,159	6,082	3,077
EA02 - Secretariat Services	6,550	5,925	625
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	4,606	3,231	1,375
Enabling Approaches Total	20,315	15,238	5,077
Grand Total	49,921	38,129	11,792

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MDREC017 - Ecuador - Penitentiary Unrest

Operating Timeframe: 20 Nov 2021 to 30 Apr 2022

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2020/11-2022/9	Operation	MDREC017
Budget Timeframe	2021/11-2022/4	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 18/Oct/2022

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	28,975	18,548	10,427
Food		25	-25
Medical & First Aid	6,000	11,468	-5,468
Teaching Materials	22,975	6,891	16,084
Other Supplies & Services		164	-164
Land, vehicles & equipment		2,848	-2,848
Office & Household Equipment		2,848	-2,848
Logistics, Transport & Storage	1,960	1,661	299
Distribution & Monitoring	1,000	1,000	0
Transport & Vehicles Costs	960	661	299
Personnel	3,114	2,772	342
National Society Staff	1,364	1,352	12
Volunteers	1,750	1,420	330
Workshops & Training	7,400	7,968	-568
Workshops & Training	7,400	7,968	-568
General Expenditure	5,425	2,005	3,420
Travel	1,900		1,900
Information & Public Relations	1,200		1,200
Office Costs	1,650	753	897
Communications	300	38	262
Financial Charges	375	1,214	-839
Indirect Costs	3,047	2,327	720
Programme & Services Support Recover	3,047	2,327	720
Grand Total	49,921	38,129	11,792