

EMERGENCY APPEAL



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

PANAMA, COSTA RICA: FLOODS

Appeal no: 36/02
18 December, 2002

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries.

For more information: www.ifrc.org

IN BRIEF

THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 313,000 (USD 219,098 or EUR 213,562) IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES TO ASSIST 8,100 BENEFICIARIES FOR 3 MONTHS

Situation

The regions on the border of Costa Rica and Panama are affected by recurrent flooding; in May 2002, floods occurred in the Province of Limon in Costa Rica and in Bocas del Toro, the centre and the capital of the Republic of Panama. Furthermore, flooding is gradually becoming more severe and is affecting larger populations.

Panama •

Since 22 November, the Atlantic Coast of Panama has been affected by heavy rains causing floods, high tides, the bursting of river banks and landslides, resulting in significant damage to housing and to agriculture. The rains resulted in swollen rivers in the regions of Kuna Yala, Colon, Costa Abajo, Panama Oeste, la Cordillera de Cocolé, Veraguas and Bocas del Toro. In addition, hundreds of people were evacuated from the area surrounding the Panama canal and were housed in temporary shelters and schools. The regions with the highest numbers of affected are as follows: Colon, Chorrera, Capipe, Bocas del Toro and Veraguas where some 79 communities were particularly hard hit. Preliminary figures indicate that over 675 houses were totally or partially destroyed in rural areas along the coast, the inhabitants of which have few resources. Furthermore, rural aqueducts were damaged, posing health risks as a result of contaminated water. Serious damage to agriculture occurred, including loss of crops, animals and infrastructure.

Costa Rica •

A cold front over the Caribbean produced heavy rains in the mountainous regions, particularly in the province of Limon, between 23 November and 1 December. This resulted in a large number of rivers overflowing their banks, generating major flooding and landslides in all vulnerable areas in the province. According to data received from the National Meteorological Institute, the amount of rain which fell in Limon between the evening of 23 November and the morning of 24 November was equivalent to the rainfall which usually occurs during the entire month of November. The most affected districts within the province are: Siquirres, Matina, Batan, Sixaola and Valle la Estrella, and the government declared the province of Limon a disaster area.

In some areas the water rose to a metre and a half, displacing entire communities. A large number of communities are isolated and without communication, particularly since electricity poles were downed. A hanging bridge in Valle de Estrella which links 16 communities was destroyed, leaving these areas totally inaccessible. Approximately 25,000 houses were damaged, as were secondary roads. Three deaths have been reported, 7 persons are reported missing and 40 were treated for minor injuries. Approximately 70 % of the area's agricultural production has been damaged and it is estimated that 75,000 persons have been directly affected by the flooding.

At the peak of the flooding, some 5,000 persons were housed in the 33 shelters which were opened by the local authorities, in collaboration with the Costa Rican Red Cross. Currently, 2,040 persons remain in 15 shelters. Despite the reduction in the number of shelters and those housed, the situation remains serious for the majority of residents living in the area.

Given the reliance on subsistence farming in the affected area, the floods have caused crop losses resulting in a food shortage, and this is exacerbated by a lack of access to some areas. In addition, the floods damaged various aqueducts in the region, resulting in a lack of clean water. More than 2,000 wells in Siquirres, Batan, Matina, Bananito, Bribri, Sixaola and Valle La Estrella have been contaminated. This situation poses a serious problem, since most of these communities rely solely on this means of storage and access to water; furthermore, it is feared that the lack of clean water could give rise to health problems. In addition, several health facilities sustained damage during the flooding. Employment is threatened in the affected area given the severe damage to the banana crop.

The flood response operations in Panama and Costa Rica aim to deliver immediate relief assistance to those affected by the flooding, facilitating the rehabilitation processes, and the development of local communities.

Needs

Immediate Needs w

The government of Panama is working to reconstruct roofing and together with Panamanian citizens is providing mattresses, clothing, food and water. CHF 40,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) in early December for the floods operation in Panama. At the request of the regional delegation, the regional logistics unit of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) provided 500 kitchen kits and 500 plastic sheets from its contingency stock. 80 volunteers from the headquarters and the branches of La Chorrera, Capira and Colon distributed these relief items, together with food, clothing and water, in addition to 2,500 blankets and 600 jerry cans with filters donated by the German Red Cross and 675 jerry cans contributed by the American Red Cross. There are outstanding immediate needs for 505 food parcels and 505 hygiene kits to complete the emergency response.

The Red Cross Society of Panama seeks to assist 505 families (approximately 2,530 people) with the provision of basic relief supplies. Beneficiaries are selected from the most affected communities in coordination with the local authorities, particularly taking into account the needs of the elderly, the sick and those in need of social assistance.

DREF funding for the operation in response to flooding by the Costa Rican Red Cross was released on 16 December. The Costa Rican Red Cross aims to assist 1,125 families (approximately 5,625 people) in communities most affected by the flooding. Vulnerable families who lost all their possessions in the floods will be identified by the National Society in coordination with the local authorities and communities.

There are outstanding immediate needs for clean drinking water, hygiene kits, kitchen kits and jerry cans.

Coordination w

In Panama, the National Society is working in close coordination with governmental authorities and with the Ministry of Health (MoH); community health education is taking place in the communities in partnership with the MoH. In Costa Rica, the National Society has received children's toys from UNICEF; CARITAS is

undertaking a distribution of clothing and the National Society is working closely with both governmental authorities and NGOs working in the area.

Proposed Operation

Objectives and activities planned to reach the objectives w

Search and rescue w

The Red Cross Society of Panama and the Costa Rican Red Cross were involved in search and rescue activities. In Panama, the National Society also provided first aid services in the initial stages of the disaster and the Costa Rican Red Cross rescued some 200 people and assisted the National Emergency Commission in the setting up of temporary shelters.

Health and carew

Objective 1: To prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases through health promotion campaigns within local communities.

Panama

- To coordinate and ensure the implementation of health education at community level with the Ministry of Health.
- To produce and distribute material for community education in health.

Costa Rica

Objective 2: To improve the psychological well-being of persons affected by the disaster.

- To provide psychological support services to those affected through teams of trained volunteers in order to facilitate emotional recovery.
- To contribute to the creation and strengthening of community support networks.

Water and sanitation w

Objective 1: To facilitate provision of clean water in the disaster-affected areas.

Panama

- Given the damage to rural aqueducts, to coordinate with the Ministry of Health in order to provide information on the dangers of ingesting contaminated water and of cooking meat from animals which drowned in the flooding.

Costa Rica

- To clean 560 wells in communities affected by the flooding in coordination with the Ministry of Health and with the technical support of the water and sanitation delegate from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit.

Relief: distribution of food and basic non-food items w

Objective 1: To support the survival of the most vulnerable flood victims in Panama and Costa Rica through provision of basic relief items.

Panama

- To provide 505 families in the affected coastal areas with food parcels and hygiene kits to complete the emergency response operation.

Costa Rica

- To distribute 1,125 food parcels, 1,125 hygiene kits, 1,125 kitchen kits and drinking water supplies for 1,125 families.

Disaster Preparedness w

Objective 1: To assist communities in Panama and Costa Rica in high-risk areas to undertake disaster mitigation and preparedness measures.

- To undertake community education in disaster preparedness.
- To increase community awareness of hazards and means to reduce or avoid their impacts.
- To use recently trained members of national intervention teams (NITs) to assist communities to develop community plans.

Capacity Building w

Objective 1: To strengthen the immediate response capacity of the Red Cross Society of Panama through the provision of basic equipment.

- To procure basic communication equipment.
- To provide equipment for 60 volunteers.
- To provide first aid kits to facilitate emergency response.
- To improve the image of the National Society through the provision of visibility items which ensure the identification of its volunteers.
- To purchase two motorcycles to facilitate assessment in rough terrain.

Objective 2: To enhance the capacity of the Red Cross Society of Panama and the Costa Rican Red Cross through institutional learning.

- To ensure lessons learned from monitoring and assessments of the flood response operations carried out in May and the current operation are integrated into future planning of relief operations to strengthen immediate response capacity.

Objective 3: To strengthen branch capacity of the Costa Rican Red Cross as a result of implementation of community based disaster preparedness activities.

- In cooperation with a local university, to carry out an evaluation of the way in which communities which were previously exposed to Red Cross training responded during the recent disaster.
- To increase the number of branch volunteers who have been trained in community based disaster preparedness methodology.

Advocacy and protection w

Objective 1: To continue to advocate with the government for the provision of assistance to affected persons who have not received support to date.

- To raise awareness of the needs of vulnerable persons in the affected areas.
- To serve as a mechanism for coordinating support to these persons.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and priorities w

- The flood response operations seek to address the needs of the most vulnerable in high risk areas of the country; response was initiated immediately in the wake of the flooding by the National Societies.
- Beneficiary criteria take fully into account gender and diversity issues.
- Emphasis is placed on partnerships, particularly with the Ministries of Health.

Media/Public Information Plan w

Information Bulletins have been published and placed on the Federation's web site. Articles are being produced on the operations and the most recent article was published on 13 December on the web site. A professional journalist and cameraman will be recruited in both countries to provide effective media coverage, funding permitting.

Capacity of the National Society w

The Red Cross Society of Panama and the Costa Rican Red Cross have gained significant experience through their involvement in previous relief operations including response to floods which occurred in May 2002. The Red Cross Society of Panama has a network of 12,000 volunteers in the country, and 800 volunteers in the affected areas. The National Society has 15 trained NIT members. The Costa Rican Red Cross has 121 branches, of which ten are in the disaster area. The National Society has 53 trained NIT members and 6,200 volunteers are available throughout the country. 142 volunteers were mobilized by the Costa Rican Red Cross at the peak of the flooding and some 35 to 40 volunteers continue to work on the operation.

Monitoring and Evaluation w

The Red Cross Society of Panama and the Costa Rican Red Cross Society will ensure monitoring and evaluation of the activities outlined in the plan of action, providing reporting in line with the Federation's reporting standards.

Capacity of the Federation w

The regional delegation for Central America recently re-located to Panama and includes a regional disaster preparedness delegate who is liaising with the National Societies. The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) is also providing assistance and has resources available to support the implementation of the above operation.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

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All International Federation Assistance Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

In line with the Minimum Reporting Standards, the first operations update on this appeal will be issued within 30-days of the launch and the second will be issued over the course of the operation; a final narrative and financial report will be issued no later than 90 days after the end of the operation.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support and these programmes are outlined on the Federation website.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

Abbas Gullet
Director
Disaster Management and Coordination

Didier J. Cherpitel
Secretary General

BUDGET SUMMARY

APPEAL No. 36/2002

Panama, Costa Rica floods

TYPE	VALUE
RELIEF NEEDS	IN CHF
Clothing & textiles	9,000
Food & seeds	122,000
Water and sanitation	63,000
Other relief supplies	15,000
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS	209,000
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<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>	
Computers & telecom. equipment	12,000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>	
Programme management	21,000
Technical support	6,000
Professional services	7,000
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>	16,000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
National staff	15,000
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>	
Travel & related expenses	6,000
Information expenses	1,000
Administrative & general expenses	5,000
External workshops & seminars	15,000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS	104,000
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TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES	313,000
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LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)	0
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NET REQUEST	313,000
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