

Emergency appeal



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Panama: Floods

Preliminary emergency appeal
n° MDRPA007
GLIDE n° FL-2010-000225-PAN
14 December 2010

This Preliminary Emergency Appeal seeks 357,967 Swiss francs (364,732 US dollars or 275,777 euro) in cash, kind, or services to support the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) to assist 2,045 beneficiary families (some 10,225 people) for six months, and will be completed by the end of June, 2011. A Final Report will be made available by the end of September 2011 (three months after the end of the operation).

162,563 Swiss francs were allocated from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support this operation. Unearmarked funds to replenish DREF are encouraged.



Since 7 November, the Bayano dam opened its gates when the water level of the lake rose above the highest historical record. Some 3,410 people were affected when the communities in the surrounding areas were flooded. Source: RCSP.

Since the first week of November, intermittent heavy rains have fallen across Panama, thus far affecting 8 provinces and some 24,407 people with severe floods and landslides. As the situation deteriorated in the country and resources declined, the government of Panama declared a state of national emergency on 9 December to facilitate the relief response. Based on the situation, this Preliminary Emergency Appeal responds to a request from the Red Cross Society of Panama, and focuses on providing support to ensure an appropriate and timely response in delivering assistance in the sectors of humanitarian relief, water and sanitation, health, logistics, and disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

[<Click here to view the attached Emergency Appeal Budget; here to link to a map of the affected area; or here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

On 4 November, 2010, due to the effect of a low pressure system in the Caribbean Sea interacting with Tropical Storm Tomas, strong and continuous rains fell across Panama, producing landslides and flooding in five provinces: Chiriqui, Veraguas, Colon, Darien and Cocolé. By 8 November, there had been two deaths and the government reported 6,200 people affected.

A month later, on 1 December a cold front from the Pacific interacted with a system of low pressure in the Caribbean, spreading further rains into the provinces of Los Santos and Bocas del Toro. A week later, on 7 and 8 December, a low pressure system in the north of Panama brought some 150mm of water in 48 hours

(as registered in the Tocumen International Airport) causing heavy precipitation in the Comarca Kuna Yala and Madugandi (indigenous regions), Colón, the Canal Area (in particular the high basin and the Bayano Lagoon), the Panama Gulf and the mountainous region of Darién.

After a month of rains, the artificial lakes in the Province of Panama reached their highest historical levels, resulting in the temporary closure of the Panama Canal for meteorological reasons for the first time in its history. In addition, it was necessary for the Bayano, Gatún and Madden dams to open their gates to alleviate water pressure on their infrastructure, and the population living downstream was obliged to evacuate as their land quickly flooded.

The National System for Civil Protection (Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil - SINAPROC) declared a red alert for East Panama where the Bayano dam is located. With the opening of the dam gates, 9 communities are severely flooded, 1,500 people are in collective centres, and 31 other communities are also affected. The Ministry of Health is concerned about the sanitation conditions in the area as more than 500,000 domestic animals are still underwater, latrines were washed away and the community cemetery is flooded. Teams from the Ministry of Health are ready to clean the area, but as of Saturday 11 December, the level of water had not yet receded.

The West Panama, Colón and Darién Provinces are also affected. Since 7 December, the Chorrera and Arraiján districts in West Panama have irregular electricity service and no potable water supply, while some communities were affected by flooding.

Several landslides have affected the province of Colón and the Transistmica highway and the road to Portobelo were closed. Some areas of the city of Colón are also flooded, and in Portobelo 18 houses were affected by 5 landslides. As the province of Darién is still isolated, damage and needs assessments are still preliminary. However, preliminary estimates state that some 411 people are affected by floods, including populations of the Embera-Wounnan indigenous territory.

Province	Injured	Deaths	Missing	Rescued	Collective Centres	People in C. Centres
Colón	73	8	3	135	5	800
East Panama	48	2	-	287	2	1,500
West Panama	28	-	-	62	3	230
Panama (Metropolitan area)	54	-	-	65	1	12
Darién	Assessments on going-		-	-	-	-
Total	203	10	3	549	11	2,542

Source: Red Cross Society of Panama

The rains and floods also caused several infrastructure damages. The cargo area of the Tocumen International Airport suffered damages and was temporarily closed. In addition, one of the two bridges that cross the Panama Canal, connecting the east and west side of the country is closed for an indefinite time due to a major landslide. Similarly, the Transistmica highway, one of the two roads connecting the two major cities of the country is closed due to severe landslides, and the Pan-American Highway is blocked at the level of Bayano, cutting off the access to the province of Darién.

Thus far, 8 provinces and some 24,407 people have been affected, and 13 have died since early November. The meteorological unit of one of the electricity supply companies (Empresa de Transmision Electrica – ETESA) forecasts that rains will continue in some of the affected provinces. Therefore, there is high probability of further affectation in the coming days due to the saturation of soils and the water levels of rivers and lakes.

Finally, as many schools are being used as collective centres and families lost all their possessions, the Ministry of Education is considering bringing forward the end of the school year in the affected areas.

Details of communities affected and numbers of houses damaged in the latest rains in December can be seen below:

Location		Affected Houses	Affected Persons	Cause
Province or Area	Community			
East Panama	Llano de Chepo	390	2560	Floods
	Cañita de Chepo	112	850	Floods
Colón	Santa Rosa	48	70	Floods
	Guayabalito	83	114	Floods
	Nuevo Vija	244	310	Floods
	Portobelo	18	38	Landslide
	Rio Gatun	53	120	Floods
	Palenque	14	35	Landslide
Darién	Barrio Norte	2	4	Floods
	El Salto	91	264	Floods
	Lajas Blancas	27	55	Floods
Panama City	Peñita	34	92	Floods
	Belisario Frias	6	19	Landslide
TOTAL		1,112	4,531	

Source: SINAPROC, Bulletin No.2, 9 December 2010

Coordination and partnerships

The RCSP is coordinating at the local level with SINAPROC and other government offices through the local Emergency Operation Centres (EOC). The National Society is also cooperating with the National Police and the Fire Service Department to carry out search and rescue activities, and with the Ministry of Housing to share information about assessments. Coordination is also taking place with the Office of the First Lady, the Minister of Health and the Major's Office of Panama City.



Some 1,873 beneficiaries have been reached with relief items since 6 November, 2010. Source: PRCS

The IFRC through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for Central America and Mexico based in Costa Rica have been actively coordinating with and supporting the RCSP. The IFRC also facilitated a meeting with personnel from Partner National Societies based in the country and the RCSP.

The American Red Cross is supporting the RCSP with human resources and

equipment to carry out further assessments as well as with relief items.

The private company Minera Panama has provided support for the provision of humanitarian relief to those affected in Coclesito in the Province of Coclé.

During this latest emergency, the RCSP is sharing its Plan of Action with the National EOC in order to better coordinate actions with the government. The goal is to divide efforts by regions while still supporting each other in all zones as needs arise.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The IFRC's DREF funding is supporting the RCSP to distribute food and non-food items to 1,045 families. However, through national donations and collaborative work with the American Red Cross, the RCSP was able to extend the relief distribution to some 1,473 beneficiary families. From 6 November to 6 December 2010, the RCSP had already distributed the following:

Items	Provinces						Total n° of items distributed
	Chiriqui	Colon	Darien	West Panama	East Panama	Coclé	
Hygiene kits	900	65	214	40	54	200	1,473
Food parcels	900	65	214	40	54	200	1,473
Kitchen kits		65		40		200	305
Mosquito nets	1,800	130		80	110	400	2,520
Blankets			856			600	1,456
Water purification treatment sachets	9,000	650	4,800			2,000	16,450

During this latest emergency situation, some 200 volunteers, 32 administrative staff, 18 people trained as National Intervention Team members, and four trained as Regional Intervention Team members have been mobilized to respond.

The needs

The RCSP has been able to assess needs in the provinces of Colón and Panama. However, the area of Darien is still isolated and volunteers are still trying to reach the area to conduct damage and needs assessments. In general, results from assessments are still reaching the RCSP's headquarters, and the overall impact of the latest flooding is still unknown.

Thus far, the Red Cross Society of Panama has been able to identify the following communities and families in need of assistance:

Province	Communities	N° of affected Families	Needs
Colon	San Pedro, Palenque, Sta. Rosa, Gatun, Portobello, Cativa, Arco Iris, Gatuncillo, El Valle, San Pedro B, Guayabalito, Monte Oscuro, El Martillo, Resurreccion, Laguito, Villa Luzmilla, Maria Chiquita, Ventura, Nuevo Vigia, S. Judas, La Verbena, Mindi, Achote, Rio Gatun, Maria Soto, Playa Langosta, Villa Venecia.	115	Blankets Sleeping Mats Food parcels
Panama	East Panama: El Llano, Cañita, Margarita, Pajonal	207	Clothing Kitchen Kits
	West Panama: El Limon, Rio Caimito, Trapichito, La Arenosa, Las Mendozas	57	Cleaning Kits School Supplies

	Chilibre: Agua Bendita, Nva. Esperanza, Cañas del Rio, Las Primaveras, Paraiso, La Fe, La Esperanza	49
Darién	Lajas Blancas, Yaviza, Canan, Sinaí.	34
TOTAL		462

Beneficiaries will be selected in coordination with local authorities to ensure that the most vulnerable families will be reached. The following criteria will be used:

- Households under the poverty line directly affected by the event, which are unable to recover quickly.
- Households headed by single mothers.
- Households headed by handicapped people.
- Households including young children or elderly people.
- Households that lost all their sources of livelihood.

The proposed operation

This operation has an overall target of providing **2,045** families with assistance. 1,545 families will receive basic relief supplies, and 1,000 families will be reached with water and sanitation support activities. From the overall target of 1,000 families under the water and sanitation outcome, the National Society will target 500 affected families that will also receive non-food items under the first outcome of this Preliminary Emergency Appeal, and will identify another 500 of the most affected families to receive support.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: Families will benefit from the provision of essential food items and non-food items to recover from the effects of the floods.	
Outputs	Activities planned
1,545 families will receive essential relief items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments • Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to track intended assistance • Ensure coordination with public institutions • Carry out verification and survey of the most affected population • Carry out local procurement of food items and purchase of non-food items by means of the Regional Logistics Unit (RLU). • Distribute food and non-food items. • Conduct monitoring and evaluation.

As mentioned above, with the support from the IFRC's DREF, the American Red Cross and national donations, the Red Cross Society of Panama has, to date, been able to deliver assistance to some 1,473 families from 6 November to 6 December. The DREF allocated for the initial emergency targeted 1,045 families. The current appeal will support further 500 families with the following relief items:

- 1 food parcel
- 1 kitchen kit
- 1 hygiene kit
- 1 cleaning kit
- 2 jerry cans
- 3 blankets
- 2 mosquito nets

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion for 1,000 families.	
Outputs	Activities planned
Safe water is provided to 1,000 families as damaged systems are restored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize one water treatment plant to supply safe water in collective centres and affected areas to 1,000 families. • Conduct water quality testing and treatment of water. • Distribution and trucking of safe water. • Distribute water purification tablets or sachets using trained volunteers. • Deployment of a RIT specializing in water and sanitation.
Appropriate sanitation, including excreta disposal, solid waste disposal and drainage, is provided to families in collective centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental of 15 latrines for collective centres in the Colón Province and the East Panama region. • Vector control and prevention measures through an education campaign.
The health status of the population is improved through hygiene promotion activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct training with locally recruited volunteers to continue hygiene promotion activities. • Conduct emergency hygiene promotion activities through trained volunteers. • Produce hygiene promotion materials based on existing materials. • Conduct lessons learnt sessions to feed into RCSP water and sanitation emergency response and preparedness programmes. • Monitor the correct use of water purification tablets, hygiene kit items, and the handling of distributed water, use of latrines and vector reduction activities.

Part of the vector control and prevention measures will be informative talks with the collective centre authorities on children's hygiene and the disposal of diapers as they can become an important and fast spreading source of diseases. Another element that will be evaluated is the possible purchase of larvicide for water containers and the distribution of pest control products.

Ten of the latrines that will be rented to support families in collective centres will be delivered to the region of East Panama (Panama province), with the other five allocated to the province of Colón. The latrines will be rented through a company that will be in charge of delivering and cleaning the latrines.

Health and care

Outcome: Reduce transmission of waterborne and communicable diseases.	
Outputs	Activities planned
Health services are provided on the primary and possibly secondary levels to meet the needs of the affected population and fill the service gaps resulting from the emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct rapid health assessments to identify needs and population with special health requirements. • Identify the gaps in health service provision in terms of availability of facilities, staff, medicines and equipment as well as population access. • Conduct health promotion and disease prevention campaigns in displaced camps and amongst those severely-affected to address identified potential health risks resulting from the floods. • Establish health surveillance teams working closely with the Ministry of Health to control the spread of vectors. • Monitoring and evaluation.
Selected affected groups and communities receiving psychosocial support have increased their resilience and coping mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide psychosocial support to families in collective centres and those affected by the current floods. • Provide psychological support to medical staff and volunteers. • Discussion with collective centre authorities and the community on the establishment of a monitoring system to prevent any cases of

	abuse against minors or gender related violence due to overcrowding or disruption of family controls.
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Part of the health promotion campaign will focus on waterborne diseases, recommending the population to avoid stagnant water that can be contaminated and could lead into cases of leptospirosis or esquistosomiasis.

Disaster preparedness and risk reduction

Outcome: Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and socio economic impact from disasters by community based programming to identify and tackle disaster risks and build community resilience.

Outputs	Activities planned
Enhanced preparedness for disaster response through increased awareness and analysis of hazard risk and increase volunteer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and / or strengtheni community committees to implement disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction activities. Launch community-based awareness campaign on disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

Logistics

Outcome: The local logistics and transport capacity of the Red Cross Society of Panama to respond with relief items is strengthened with the support of standardized items prepositioned in the IFRC's Regional Logistic Unit in Panama as well as with technical support for local procurement.

Outputs	Activities planned
Enhanced logistics capacity and technical support facilitate the procurement and distribution of relief items and water and sanitation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent of two 4x4 vehicles to support the operation. Local procurement of food items and purchase of non-food items by the Regional Logistics Unit (RLU). Procurement of local transport services through the RLU transport network Delivery a prepositioned Watsan Kit for 1,000 families.

The Regional Logistics Unit has the primary task of providing additional logistics capacity by:

- Assessment of logistics infrastructure, setting-up an efficient logistic system and identifying the best supply chain to support the operation.
- Carry out receipt of relief goods shipped by air and sea and arrange transportation to distribution points.
- Liaise and coordinate with other key actors to ensure best uses of all information.

The updated mobilization table for this operation can be found on the Federation's Disaster Management Information System: https://www-secure.ifrc.org/DMISII/pages/03_response/0307_logistics.aspx

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

Maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for advocacy, maintaining the profile of the emergency operation and for fundraising. During an operation, communications between affected populations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as with the media and donors, is an essential mechanism for effective disaster response and the cornerstone to promoting greater quality, accountability, and transparency.

The communications activities covered by this appeal are aimed at supporting the Red Cross Society of Panama to improve their communications capacities and develop appropriate communications tools and products to support effective operations. These activities will include training, capacity building, as well as material support and are closely coordinated with the IFRC's Communications Department.

Capacity of the National Society

In 2008, National Societies from countries prone to hurricanes in the Americas participated actively in the revision of a contingency plan for the region (which had been elaborated during the 2007 pre-hurricane meeting). The development of the regional contingency plan helped explore disaster preparedness tools, available capacities within the region, possible response strategies and operating procedures, which provided participants with hands-on practice in readiness for such a response. In previous emergencies, the RCSP had the experience of developing alliances with NGOs, such as Nutre Hogar, to assist the affected population residing in collective centres.

Capacity of the IFRC

The IFRC, through PADRU and the Regional Representation for Mexico and Central America, is providing support to the National Society for the emergency response. A Disaster Management delegate has been supporting the development of the plan of action and relief distributions. Additionally, PADRU will continue to provide technical support, including for the tendering and purchasing processes within the country. This support could include material and technical support for all of the objectives, as needed.

Budget summary

See attached budget (Annex 1) for details.

Matthias Schmale
Under Secretary General
Programme Services

Bekele Geleta
Secretary General

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[<Emergency Appeal budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

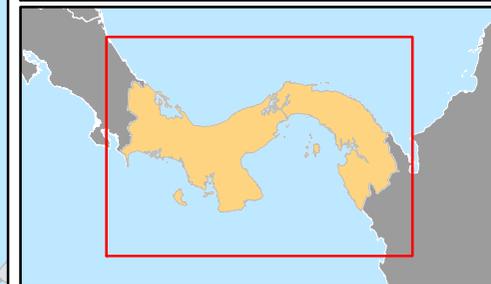
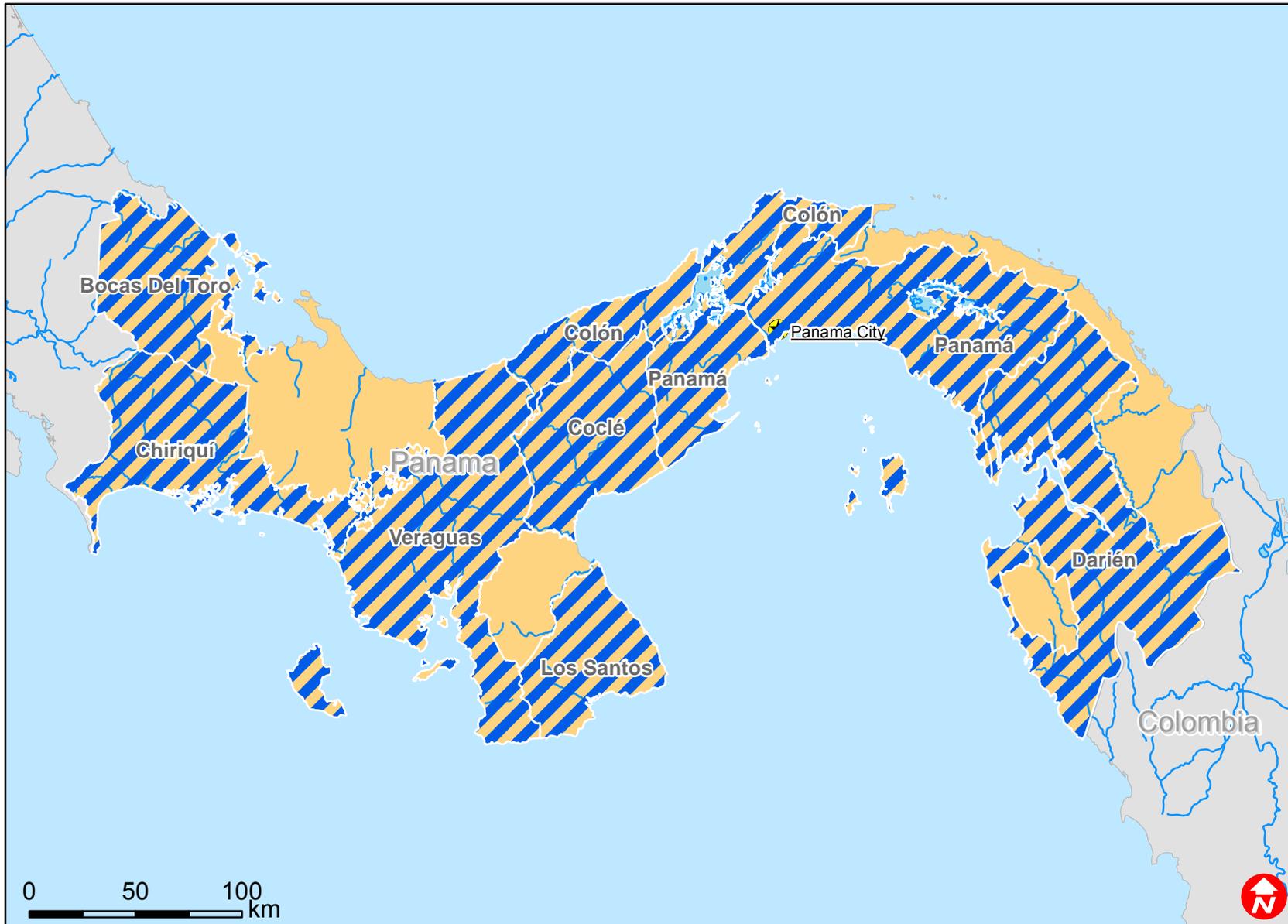
BUDGET SUMMARY

Budget Group	Multilateral Response	Inter-Agency Shelter Coordination	Coordinated Support (ERUs)	TOTAL BUDGET CHF
Shelter - Relief				-
Shelter - Transitional				-
Construction - Housing				-
Construction - Facilities / Infrastructure				-
Construction - Materials				-
Clothing & Textiles	45,540			45,540
Food	61,800			61,800
Seeds & Plants				-
Water & Sanitation	30,500			30,500
Medical & First Aid				-
Teaching Materials	10,000			10,000
Utensils & Tools	12,500			12,500
Other Supplies & Services & Cash Disbursements	64,260			64,260
ERU (Emergency Response Units)				-
Total Supplies	224,600	0	0	224,600
Land & Buildings				-
Vehicles				-
Computer & Telecom				-
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment				-
Medical Equipment				-
Other Machinery & Equipment				-
Total Land, vehicles & equipment	0	0	0	0
Storage				-
Distribution & Monitoring	3,000			3,000
Transport & Vehicle Costs	24,050			24,050
Total Transport & Storage	27,050	0	0	27,050
International Staff	3,300			3,300
Regionally Deployed Staff	4,000			4,000
National Staff	16,000			16,000
National Society Staff	19,224			19,224
Other Staff benefits				-
Consultants				-
Total Personnel	42,524	0	0	42,524
Workshops & Training	10,000			10,000
Total Workshops & Training	10,000	0	0	10,000
Travel	2,000			2,000
Information & Public Relation	9,108			9,108
Office Costs	1,518			1,518
Communications	2,211			2,211
Professional Fees	300			300
Financial Charges	10,000			10,000
Other General Expenses	0			0
Total General Expenditure	25,137	0	0	25,137
Cash Transfers to National Societies				-
Cash Transfers to 3rd parties				-
Total Contributions & Transfers	0	0	0	0
Program Support	21,848			21,848
Total Programme Support	21,848	0	0	21,848
Services & Recoveries	6,809			6,809
Shared Services				-
Total Services	6,809	0	0	6,809
TOTAL BUDGET	357,967	0	0	357,967
Available Resources				
Multilateral Contributions				
ERUs contributions				

TOTAL AVAILABLE RESOURCES	0	0	0	0
NET EMERGENCY APPEAL NEEDS	357,967	0	0	357,967



Panama: Floods



 Affected provinces