



## PANAMA: FLOODS

**DREF Bulletin**  
**no. MDRPA001**  
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*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 185 countries.*

### In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 67,922 (USD 53,934 or EUR 42,769) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to respond to the needs in this operation. This operation is expected to be implemented over 4 months, and will be completed by 20 February 2007; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation by 20 May 2007. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

#### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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

*For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

## **Background and current situation**

Torrential rains have been reported in several areas in Panama since 12 October. It is estimated that 1,900 people have been directly affected in the regions of Panama East, Panama West and Chiriqui. Authorities have reported flooding and emergency situations resulting from these rains in communities on the banks of the River Pacora, as well as landslides in the districts of San Miguelito, Las Garzas and Juan Demóstenes Arosemena. In Chiriqui, the torrential rainfall has affected the communities of Divala, Rodolfo Aguilár, Varital and Sitio Lázaro, mainly due to the overflowing of the Chiriqui Viejo and Chico rivers.

The Red Cross Society of Panama has responded to the emergency by providing support in rescue and evacuation, first aid care and the provision of relief items such as clothing, dry food and hygiene kits. The Red Cross Society of Panama's Headquarters has ensured communication with the branches of David, Barú, Bugaba, Santa Ana, San Martin and Base 24 de Diciembre, which are providing emergency support.

## **Red Cross action**

The Red Cross Society of Panama has targeted 380 families identified by local Branches as the most vulnerable in the affected areas of the East and West of Panama province and in the province of Chiriqui. These families were selected according to needs based on the following criteria:

- § Families whose houses were flooded, who lost crops and/or farm animals.
- § Families with single mothers, low incomes, large families, families including members with mental and/or physical disabilities and/or elderly persons.
- § Families not receiving aid from other public or private organizations in response to the emergency situation.

With the funding provided through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund, the Red Cross Society of Panama aims to provide aid in response to immediate needs through the following relief items:

- Hygiene kits
- Kitchen sets
- Family food parcels (supplementary kits)
- Blankets (3 units per family)

The possibility of including special kits for children between 0 and 5 years of age is being reviewed.

The Red Cross Society of Panama will also carry out an awareness raising campaign on environmental health issues with a focus on water and sanitation for the affected communities. For this purpose, an initial training workshop will be carried out for the Red Cross volunteers who will multiply this knowledge within the communities.

In addition, logistical support for transportation and distribution will be provided to the Red Cross Society of Panama in order to carry out the planned activities. Two vehicles from leasing programme will be utilized for the relief and response operation during the rainy season. The DREF funding will also facilitate the deployment of a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member, who will provide support for the environment health awareness-raising campaign.

**Objective 1: 380 of the most affected families (approximately 1,900 persons) benefit from the distribution of food and non food items to assist them to recover from the effects of the floods.**

The 380 families are in the following areas:

<b>Province / Area</b>	<b>Families affected</b>
Chiriqui	290
Panama, East area	44
Panama, West area	46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380</b>

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The following activities will be carried out in order to achieve this objective:

1. Surveys and beneficiary selection in the affected communities; the above-mentioned selection criteria will be applied.
2. Storage, transport and identification of distribution points.
3. Distribution of food and non-food items.
4. Monitoring and evaluation by National Society personnel with the support of the Federation.

### **Objective 2: Affected communities benefit from raised awareness in environmental health topics as a result of talks given by Red Cross volunteers during the operation.**

Volunteers from the Red Cross Society of Panama will carry out awareness-raising talks in environmental health for the population of the affected communities. Talks will be enhanced through the distribution of informative material such as posters and brochures to the participating families. Prior to the awareness-raising talks, the volunteers carrying out this activity will take part in a training workshop in this subject focusing on replication of knowledge in the communities. In order to prepare and organize the talks and the training workshops, a RITs member specialized in water and sanitation will be deployed for a one month period.

The following activities are envisaged in order to achieve the above objective:

1. Design and purchase of training material
2. Identification of Red Cross volunteers who will take part in the training of trainers' workshop in environmental health.
3. Holding of a training workshop in environmental health.
4. Design and purchase of dissemination material for the communities.
5. Carrying out of awareness-raising talks on environmental health in affected communities.
6. Monitoring and evaluation by National Society personnel with the support of the Federation.

The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Panama Regional Delegation will provide technical support for the design, organization and implementation of the activities.

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