



COSTA RICA: FLOODS

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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 50,000 (USD 41,563 or EUR 30,414) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) for relief operations in Costa Rica. This operation is expected to be implemented in three months and will be completed by 25 December 2007; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 25 March 2008). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

[Click here to go to a map of the affected regions](#)

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 \(NGO's\) 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

Costa Rica has been affected by an unusually heavy rainy season. On September 24, the National Emergency Commission (Comisión Nacional de Prevención de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias, CNE) declared a green alert for Northern San José in the central valley, and the province of Guanacaste in the Northern Pacific coast. Non-stop rains have occurred for the last 48 hours causing several rivers to overflow and severely damaging the towns of Santa Cecilia, Guayabal, El Guabo, Barrio Limón, Bernabela, Las Camisitas - amongst others in the Northern Pacific region. According to the latest confirmed information there are more than 2,500 families affected. Four

shelters have been opened housing more than 600 people.



*Areas affected by the floods.
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*

Some of the communities affected in the Northern San José region due to heavy floods are Barrio Maiquetía, Barrio La Granja, Santa Eduviges, calle el Robel among others. There were four shelters made available with 280 affected people. There are 268 houses damaged, 45 houses destroyed and five houses in high risk in the Northern San José region.

Bridges, roads and plantations have also been vastly destroyed. The CNE has been monitoring the situation closely and activated the corresponding committees in order to prepare for the initial needs and damage assessments. The CNE started distributing drinking water to the affected areas and deployed machinery to clearout the roads so relief

aid can reach to all affected areas.

Red Cross action

Since, the onset of the emergency on 21 September, the **Costa Rican Red Cross (CRC)** has been monitoring and performing rescue and evacuation activities due to the constant rains throughout the Northern Pacific coast. All CRC local branches in the affected regions have been activated as well as the Emergency Operation Centres (Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia, COE). Rescue teams and officials have been deployed to the affected areas to

supervise the operation and to perform damage and needs assessments. The CRC rescue teams evacuated and rescued 1,000 people from the floods and placed them in the shelters opened for the emergency. Relief items such as food parcels, blankets and mattresses were distributed. The CRC is coordinating with the municipalities in the areas affected along with the Ministry of Health the planning of relief activities.

The needs

Immediate needs:

The CRC plan of action identifies as their immediate needs:

- Drinking water
- Food parcels
- Blankets
- Lifeboats
- Tents
- Hygiene kits
- Kitchen kits
- Repairing of clogged pipelines
- Cleaning of water wells
- Heavy machinery to clear out roads
- Medical assistance in isolated areas



Houses destroyed in Costa Rica. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

Longer-term needs:

The early recovery and rehabilitation needs of the affected populations will be reviewed by assessment teams and the response of the Costa Rican Red Cross will be adapted accordingly.

The proposed operation

This DREF allocation seeks to support immediate response activities in the affected areas of the Northern Pacific region in Costa Rica.

Objectives, planned activities and number of families assisted will be adjusted in due course in accordance with more detailed information resulting from damage and needs assessments, including possible clean up operations, health, shelter and water and sanitation needs.

Objectives and activities planned

Emergency relief

Objective 1: 500 families (2,500 beneficiaries) will benefit from the provision of relief items to recover from the effects of the floods.

The CRC plan of action will distribute the following items:

- 500 Cleaning kits
- 500 Hygiene kits
- 500 Kitchen kits

The content of the kits are based on the SPHERE project humanitarian charter and the code of conduct for disaster relief and is as follows:

Hygiene kit (for 5 persons for 1 month)	Quantities
Washing powder, 1 kg, for washing machine, for cloth	3
Toilet, paper, hygienic, roll	12
Soap, body soap, 100g, piece	5
Toothpaste, tube 75 ml	5
Tooth brush, medium	5
Shampoo, 250 ml	2
Razor, disposable	5
Sanitary napkins, normal	8

Kitchen kit (for 1 family of 5 persons)	Quantities
Bowl for food	5
Fork, table, stainless steel	5
Frying pan, 2.5L	1
Knife, kitchen, stainless steel blade	1
Knife, table knife, stainless steel	5
Spoon, wooden, stirring, 30cm	1
Spoon, soup, stainless steel, 15 ml	5
Cooking pot, 5L, alum. diam 20 cm	1
Cooking pot, 7L, alum. diam 24 cm, with handles	1
Cup, stainless steel, with handle, 300ml	5
Plate, deep, aluminium, diam. 22 cm	5

PADRU has sent a container with 500 kitchen and hygiene kits to CRC to be distributed immediately. The remaining 500 cleaning kits will be purchased locally. The distributions will be held in coordination with the area's local branches and with the CRC.



Costa Rican Red Cross volunteers assessing the damages. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross.

Activities planned to reach this objective include:

- Identification and registration of the most vulnerable families with special emphasis on gender inequities and disability conditions.
- Coordination with national, regional, provincial and local authorities.
- Warehousing, dispatch and transportation of relief items from local headquarters to the final destinations.
- Regular detailed reporting on the distribution.
- Monitoring and evaluation

Communications and coordination

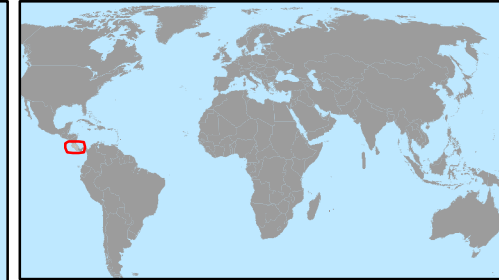
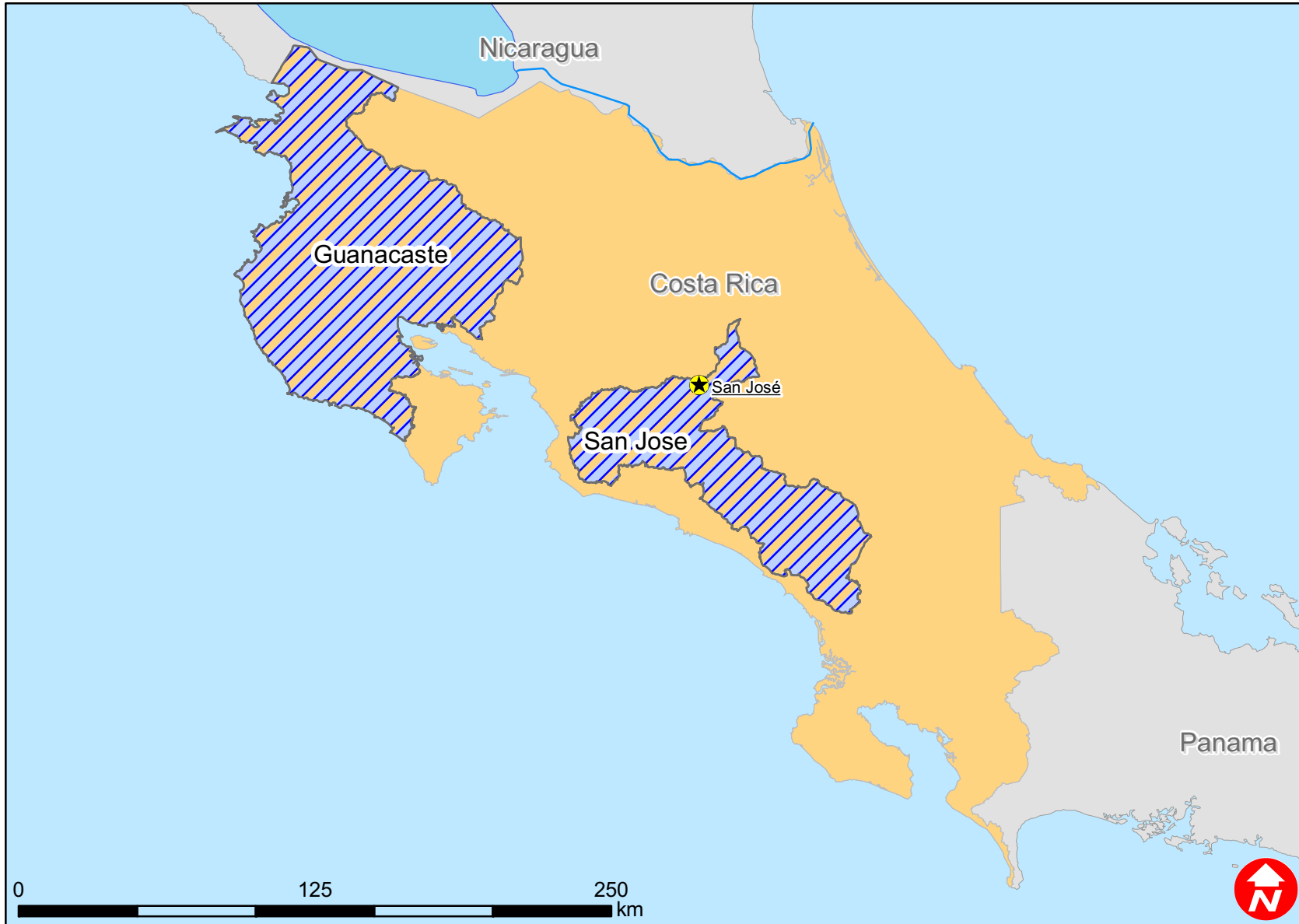
Maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations. During an operation, communications between affected populations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well as with the media and donors, is an essential mechanism for effective disaster response and the cornerstone to promote greater quality, accountability, and transparency. There has been close coordination and support to the Costa Rican Red Cross with an aim to increase the visibility of their actions in regards to the communication through the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), the Regional Representation Offices and the Communications department of the International Federation's Secretariat in Geneva. Furthermore, the communication activities targets five main target audiences: the media, the Red Cross Movement, beneficiaries, local authorities and donors.



Two reports have been issued through the Disaster Management Information System (DMIS) on the global Federation website. The communication activities between PADRU and the Costa Rican Red Cross have enabled the possibility of coordinating the dispatch of 500 Kitchen kits and 500 Hygiene kits to the CRC in coordination with the Regional Logistic Unit (RLU). PADRU will coordinate deployment of personnel and/or Regional Intervention Teams (RITs) if needed and requested by the Costa Rican Red Cross.

[*Click here to return to the title page or contact information*](#)



Costa Rica: Floods



-  Capitals
-  Affected provinces