

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Nicaragua: Floods

Information bulletin n° 1
29 May 2010

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time.

A low pressure system moving over the Central American Pacific coastal region is causing intense rainfall in Nicaragua. Several departments – Chinandega, León, Managua, and Matagalpa– have been severely affected by flooding. The Nicaraguan Red Cross (NRC) has been actively engaged with national authorities to monitor and coordinate response activities.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has determined that external assistance is currently not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.



Farmers look at a bridge damaged by heavy rain at Quezalguaque town, some 135 km west of the capital Managua, 21 May 2010. Thousands of people have been affected the flooding caused by heavy rain on the Pacific coast of Nicaragua. Source: REUTERS/Oswaldo Rivas

[<Click here to view the map of the affected areas, or here for detailed contact information>](#)

The Situation

Since 26 May 2010 intense rainfall has been experienced in the Pacific region of the western and northern areas of the country with precipitation registering 67.6mm in the Chinandega department, 70.1mm in the León department, 26.8mm in the San Isidro municipality (Matagalpa department) and 20.5 in the Jinotega department, while the rest of the country has experienced moderate rainfall. National authorities are also taking precautionary measures in the coastal areas where waves are foreseen to reach 2-3 metres high and visibility will be reduced.

The Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (Instituto Nicaragüense de Estudios Territoriales - INETER) informed that severe rains will continue in the following days particularly over the Pacific region due to the low pressure system moving towards the northeast of the Central American Pacific coast. INETER forecasts that the rainfall will have a greater impact in the departments of León and Chinandega.

In the **Matagalpa department** located in the northern centre of Nicaragua, communities are without communication due to damaged bridges and roads. Two people in this department were victims of strong river currents. The city of Matagalpa is at risk of landslides that could strike settlements and neighbourhoods located on slopes such as the sector of San Martín located in the north-eastern side of the city where more than three houses could collapse. Approximately 38,240 people have been affected in the central zone of the city; these neighbourhoods include La Chispa, Sabadell, Dos de Marzo, El Mirador, El Tule, Nuevo Amanecer and Apoyo al Combatiente. A hospital was also affected, Hospital Regional César Amador Molina.

The Civil Defence has also reported that the level of the Grande de Matagalpa River has risen and has blocked traffic between the cities of San Dionisio and Esquipulas.

In the **Chinandega department**, the local NRC branch reports that the Gallo and Tecomapa rivers have exceeded their normal height. To date no damages have been reported; but the staff and volunteers of this branch continue to monitor the situation. In the residential area of Divino Niño 179 people (30 families) have been sheltered in the local school. In el Limonar, eight families were evacuated to a local church.

Additionally, another municipality within the Chinandega department is **Corinto**. Families from the areas of Playón and the Buena Esperanza community are being sheltered in José Chendel de Corinto High School. The following table outlines the population of the two affected communities:

Community	Families	People
Jesús de la Buena Esperanza	9	29
El Playón	5	12
Total	14	41

San Francisco Libre municipality, in the **Managua department**, has been most affected. The National Society reports that roads leading to this municipality present serious damages, while the Talolinda Bridge has collapsed. Moreover, the Laurel Galán Bridge which connects the Las Mojaras community is close to collapse.

Access by land is not possible at the moment due to the floods, and the following communities are isolated: Río Grande, Santa María, El Brasil Blanco, Cenizera and Las Mojaras.

A meeting took place with the local authorities of this municipality and evacuation activities have been distributed among the institutions present in the area to safeguard the population if required. The municipality remains on green alert until the situation returns to normality. The following institutions participated in this coordination meeting: the Nicaraguan Red Cross, the National Port Company (Empresa Nacional de Puertos - ENAP), General Firefighter's Office, the Ministry of Health and the National Police.

In the **municipality of Tipitapa**, also located in the department of Managua, the local NRC branch reports that 17 families from the community of Ebeneser in the area of Timal have been evacuated as a cautionary measure. These families are now staying in collective family centres. In addition, approximately ten other families have been evacuated from the communities of Los Pozos and Letrinás as their homes were affected by 1.5m of rain water. These families are now staying with relatives.

Since 26 May 2010 heavy rainfall has left houses and more than 40 streets flooded, leaving automobiles stranded in the **department of León**. Twenty seven families have been evacuated to collective centres in the Malpaisillo municipality of this department. In the Jicaral community 300 families suffered from flooding and have requested support to be evacuated as they are without communication due to the flooding of the El Tamarindo River.

The civil defence also reported that in various municipalities in Leon are blocked due to the heavy rains and many households have sustained damages. For example, in the Quezalquaque municipality there are 150 people in collective centres. In addition there are 22 houses that have been flooded in the Los Cocos community; however, the community members refuse to evacuate the premises. While in the Telica municipality, 26 houses from the La Pintora community have been flooded. Bridges have also suffered from damages leaving communities isolated. Currently there are five collective centres open in the department.

In the **Jinotega department**, precautionary steps have been taken to evacuate 14 people who resided on the slopes of the hills of Germán Pomares, Carlos Rizo II Etapa and El Panorama. Rivers are also under close observation as they have risen to hazardous levels.

In the **Estelí city**, located in the department of the same name, the Civil Defence estimates that at least 31,000 people live in high-risk areas in this city. To date, one person died and two were rescued, while at least ten households from the Panamá Soberana neighbourhood are flooded (Estelí municipality).

A preliminary assessment from the Civil Defence reports that 1,626 people have been affected including at least 283 families living in collective centres. However, as assessments are ongoing the number of affected people could increase in the coming days.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Nicaraguan Red Cross is currently meeting with the Secretariat of the National System of Prevention, Mitigation and Response to Disasters (Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación and Atención de Desastres) to coordinate assistance to affected families. In addition, members of the rescue/relief brigade are evacuating community members of San Francisco Libre. In Timal the Nicaraguan Red Cross has begun assessments and evacuations and it will continue to monitor the situation in different departmental branches throughout the country.

The Nicaraguan Red Cross maintains two brigades in San Francisco Libre to conduct search, rescue and evacuation activities as required. Preliminary assessments from the local NRC branch report that families from the communities of La Ceibita, la Liga and Quinteros from the San Francisco Libre municipality have been evacuated to a local high school..

Affected people	Number
Families	23
Children	58
Women	35
Adults	37
Total of people	130

In the department of Chontales, the Juigalpa NRC branch reports that evacuations were carried out in the Los Rejones and La Esperanza communities due to the floods (Juigalpa city). Evacuees are being sheltered in the Hato Grande School. The overall population in these two communities is described in the table below:

Communities	Families	People
Los Rejones	12	72
La Esperanza	4	12
Total	16	84

Moreover, in the department of Carazo, the Jinotepe NRC branch is carrying out preventive cleaning activities in the areas of the **Jinotepe city** that could be affected by the intense rains. Also, it has identified schools nearby vulnerable communities that could serve as collective centres.

Preliminary assessments have identified that there are needs for:

- Potable water
- Plastic sheeting
- Medical attention for children

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies through its Pan America Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for Central America and Mexico, is in constant communication with the Nicaraguan Red Cross.

How we work

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 the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation'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 International Federation'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

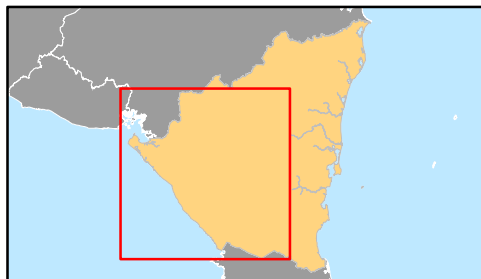
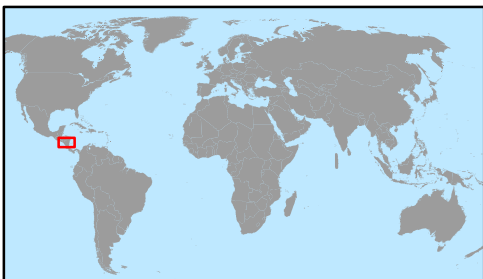
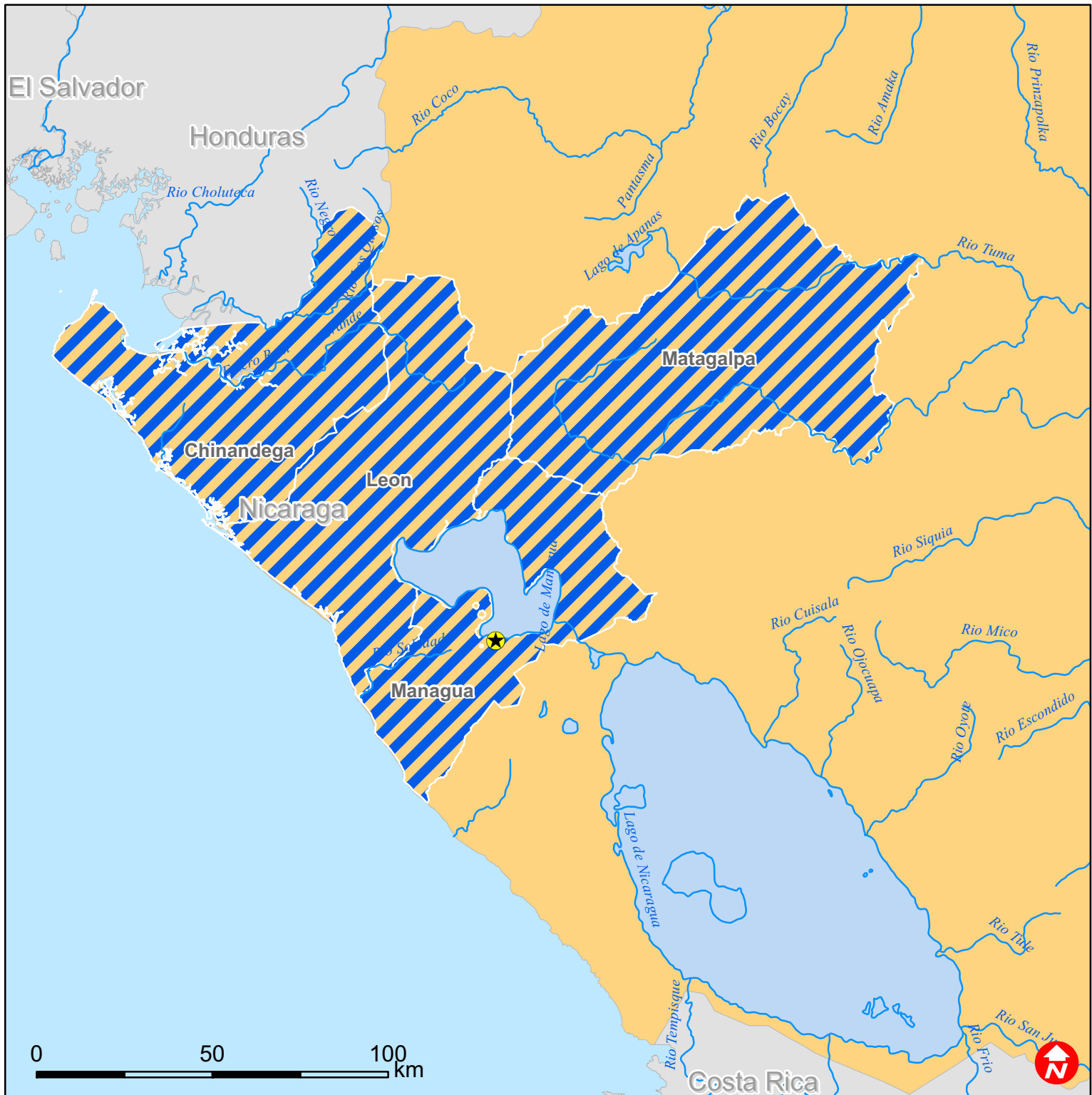
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[< Map below; or click here to return to the title page >](#)



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 Affected districts