

DREF operation final report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Costa Rica: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRCR007
GLIDE n° [EQ-2010-000251-CRI](#)
19 July 2011

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

Summary: Following a low pressure system that caused increased rainfall and flooding in Costa Rica, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated 92,709 Swiss francs on 10 December 2010 to support the Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) to deliver relief assistance to 1,000 affected households (approximately 5,000 people).

The [DREF operations update no.1](#) (issued on 27 January 2011) modified the planned outcomes and number of target families. The National Society's revised outcomes focused on delivering basic relief items to the most vulnerable people who had not been reached by other State institutions or partners, providing well cleaning to 1,300 households (approximately 6,500 people), and strengthening CRRC capacity building in damage and needs assessments.



The Costa Rican Red Cross cleaned 1,342 wells which were contaminated by the floods. Photo by: CRRC

By the end of this DREF-supported operation, and as detailed in this final report, CRRC volunteers and staff fully met its adjusted outcomes. The National Society provided relief items to 250 families (reaching at least 1,171 people) and cleaned 1,342 wells used by at least 6,340 people. Additionally, 24 CRRC volunteers received specialized training in damage and needs assessments.

The operation is now closed, with a final balance of 12,852 Swiss francs unspent that will be returned to the DREF.

The Netherlands Red Cross and Netherlands government contributed with 32,430 Swiss francs, the Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian government contributed with 14,206 Swiss francs and the Slovenian government contributed with 12,691 Swiss francs to the DREF in replenishment of the allocation made for this operation. The governments of Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway and ECHO are the principle donors to the DREF. Further details on all donors is available at:

<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

[<Click here for the final financial report, or here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

After the Costa Rican Red Cross successfully responded to Tropical Storm Matthew and the effects of Hurricane Tomas which were felt in this Central American country, the Costa Rican people had to cope with a new weather event starting in November 2010. A low pressure system generated intense rainfall and flooding in the northern area and Caribbean coast of the country. Integrated damage assessments centralized by the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response (*Comisión Nacional de Gestión de Riesgo y Atención de Emergencias*) — to which the Costa Rican Red Cross belongs according to domestic legislation— reported that approximately 247 communities and 13,500 people were affected. The rains and floods severely impacted the regions' water systems, damaging aqueducts and contaminating wells. Other public infrastructure was affected by landslides, which damaged and blocked roads, thus isolating affected communities.

Despite already being engaged in emergency response efforts in the last quarter of 2010, the Costa Rican Red Cross had the initial reserves and capacities to respond to the floods. However, with the extension of the emergency through December, outside support was needed to increase the CRRC's response skills and resources. The National Society drew up a Plan of Action and requested a DREF with assistance from the IFRC's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). The CRRC revised its Plan of Action, with support from an IFRC disaster management delegate, to ensure National Society capacity building and a more comprehensive humanitarian response aimed at reaching the vulnerable populations less likely to have the resources necessary to plan their individual and collective recovery. As will be detailed below, relief goods were distributed in the district of Puerto Viejo, Sarapiquí canton in the Heredia province. Well cleaning activities were undertaken in the cantons of Pococí, Guácimo, Siquirres, Matina, Limón and Talamanca in the Limón province.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

From the moment the national meteorological service forecasted that the low pressure system could cause severe damage in the country, the Costa Rican Red Cross began preparing its humanitarian response actions in direct coordination with the state institution responsible for disaster response, the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response.

Despite it being their third major operation in a relatively short time period, CRRC volunteers, staff and leadership worked together to carry out search and rescue activities, evacuations and provide first aid during the first phase of the emergency, followed by damage and needs assessments. The National Society then provided relief items and cleaned contaminated wells in the following stage.

The overall CRRC operation reached 11,615 people during this emergency operation. Note that the DREF-supported operation focused on relief distribution and cleaning of wells. The following table summarizes the total National Society's response actions:

Activities	Quantity	People reached
Aquatic rescue	---	60
Evacuation	---	4,000
First aid	---	20
Distribution of relief items (kitchen set, hygiene kit and food package)	250 families	1,171
Cleaning of wells	1,342 wells	6,340
CRRC volunteers trained in damage and needs assessment	---	24
Total		11,615

Further details on the activities included in the DREF-supported operation outcomes are provided in the Achievements against outcomes section.

In addition to IFRC support coordinated through PADRU, the Costa Rican Red Cross response coordinated actions with the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response, the Ministry of Health and the non-governmental organization World Vision.

Achievements against outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Outcome: 250 most affected families will benefit from the provision of non-food items to meet their immediate needs resulting from the floods.

Activities planned:

- Continue with rapid needs assessments to select target families.
- Distribute kitchen sets and hygiene kits to 250 families.
- Replenishment of 250 food parcels that have been handed out to the most affected families during the onset of the emergency.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.

Impact:

The National Society fully met this planned outcome by providing 250 families with food and basic non-food items. In late December 2010, the CRRC procured 250 kitchen sets and 250 hygiene kits through the Regional Logistic Unit and locally purchased food items to distribute to vulnerable households. Stickers with the CRRC emblem and a statement on the prohibition of its sale were used on the containers (bags and boxes) in which this humanitarian aid was transported and distributed.

After a delay due to customs procedures, the National Society transported the goods to the district of Puerto Viejo, Sarapiquí canton in the Heredia province. Four communities affected by the December 2010 floods were chosen based on their level of vulnerability. The communities selected were Precario Nogal (198 people), Los Lirios (231 people), Tres Rosales (293 people) and Colonia Las Orquideas (449 people), which yearly endure the effects of floods. The population in these communities is primarily composed of banana and pineapple plantation workers, as well as households dedicated small subsistence plots. Emphasis was placed on targeting female-headed households, as well as families of migrant workers.



250 affected families received food and basic non-food items in the Heredia province. Photo by: CRRC.

After distributions were completed 250 households (1,171 people according to the CRRC records) benefitted from the provision of non-food items to meet their immediate needs resulting from the floods.

Challenges:

The National Society recognizes the need to strengthen its skills regarding import procedures in humanitarian operations. Due to problems related to import taxes requested for the kits, the CRRC had to solicit a tax exemption from the Ministry of the Presidency for these goods. Due to changes in procedures at the level of the Ministry of the Treasury, the State institution responsible for customs, the kits were held up in this government branch's warehouses for several months until the complete paperwork was presented and approved. The CRRC includes this as one of the main lessons learnt during this DREF-supported operation. Hence, the National Society currently is taking action to strengthen its knowledge of State requirements and import procedures to avoid delays in future humanitarian interventions.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases has been reduced through the cleaning of wells.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid water and sanitation emergency needs and capacity assessments in coordination with local authorities.
- Clean 1,300 wells in the most flood-affected communities.
- Rent 4x4 vehicles from the Regional Logistic Unit fleet for the duration of the operation.
- Train 15 volunteers in the procedure of cleaning wells to ensure transfer of skills and knowledge in order to increase the National Society capacity

Impact:

Due to the CRRC's organization, its volunteers and staff were able to surpass this water and sanitation outcome. The excessive precipitation and the related flooding had damaged one of the population's main

water sources and well cleaning was urgently needed. A total of 1,342 wells, slightly above the initially 1,300 planned, were cleaned in affected communities. The clean wells provide water to a minimum of 6,340 people.

Well cleaning was undertaken in the cantons of Pococí, Guácimo, Siquirres, Matina, Limón and Talamanca in the Limón province.

Understanding the need to have a qualified team fully dedicated to this activity, the CRRC hired four people to lead the well cleaning, whilst offering hands-on training to CRRC volunteers from local branches when possible. Despite the transportation challenges, explained below, from 10 January through 23 March 2011, the CRRC team travelled throughout the region to ensure that the most vulnerable populations would have access to clean water sources following the floods.

Well cleaning was conducted by the CRRC in coordination with the Ministry of Health.

The DREF allocation covered the fuel of the cleaning equipment, tools and chlorine as well as transportation and meals for volunteers.

Challenges:

In order to ensure the transportation of teams and equipment for well cleaning, this DREF-supported included the renting of two vehicles from the IFRC's Regional Logistic Unit fleet to support water and sanitation activities; however, this did not take place. State authorities indicated that the correct import procedures for the import of the two 4x4 vehicles had not been fulfilled; this notification was received after both vehicles had entered Costa Rica in late January 2011 and insurance for the vehicles had been paid. Upon receiving this notification, the National Society stored the vehicles until they could be returned to the Regional Logistic Unit in late March 2011. The National Society successfully resolved this difficulty, as the National Relief and Operations Office of the Costa Rican Red Cross loaned its vehicles to the water and sanitation team to carry out the well cleaning activities.

National Society Capacity

Outcome: The capacity of CRRC to respond to the current and future emergencies is strengthened.

Activities planned:

- Conduct one damage assessments course for 20 volunteers.

Impact:

As a fundamental aspect of this DREF operation, the Costa Rican Red Cross strengthened its skills in conducting damage and needs assessments. The objective of training 20 CRRC volunteers was surpassed as 24 volunteers were trained in a four-day workshop on damage and needs assessment procedures.

As a result of the coordination with the National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Response, two of its staff (the head of operations and the training coordinator) shared the facilitation of this workshop with the CRRC. The workshop was held from 14 to 18 March 2011 near San José, where 4 instructors and support staff worked together to teach the 24 volunteers the essentials of damage and needs assessments. The training helped to reinforce the application of the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement during assessments. Furthermore, the National Society used this opportunity to reinforce its internal standards and it also enabled participants to better grasp state-level norms and actions within Costa Rica.

The National Society made special efforts to select volunteers who are committed to the institution, as well as representatives from different branches. Whilst the course had some impact on the emergency response to the December 2010 floods, more effects will be forthcoming when the National Society embarks on future humanitarian aid endeavours.

The coordinated work with the trainers from the State's emergency commission provided unexpected added value. Since the CRRC is part of the National Emergencies and Disasters Response System, this course enabled the participants to practice using the system's unified information gathering tools and reinforced ties between both institutions. Furthermore, the use of local instructors reduced travel costs often incurred with trainers from the Centre of Reference in Disaster Preparedness in El Salvador or Movement members located in other countries.

Challenges:

Due to the dependency on the availability of trainers from the state emergency response institution, challenges arose regarding the workshop's timing. The National Society needs to continue its effort to offer training for trainers, particularly in damage and needs assessments, to ensure these opportunities are regularly planned and implemented.

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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[<Final financial report below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2010/11-2011/6
Budget Timeframe	2010/11-2011/6
Appeal	MDRCR007
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Consolidated Funding

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
A. Budget	92,709					92,709
B. Opening Balance	0					0
Income						
Other Income						
<i>DREF Allocations</i>	<i>92,709</i>					<i>92,709</i>
C4. Other Income	92,709					92,709
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)	92,709					92,709
D. Total Funding = B + C	92,709					92,709
Appeal Coverage	100%					100%

II. Movement of Funds

	Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination	TOTAL
B. Opening Balance	0					0
C. Income	92,709					92,709
E. Expenditure	-79,857					-79,857
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)	12,852					12,852

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

MDRCR007 - Costa Rica - Floods

Appeal Launch Date: 06 dec 10

Appeal Timeframe: 06 dec 10 to 06 mar 11

Final Report

Selected Parameters	
Reporting Timeframe	2010/11-2011/6
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III. Consolidated Expenditure vs. Budget

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Disaster Management	Health and Social Services	National Society Development	Principles and Values	Coordination		
A							B	A - B
BUDGET (C)		92,709					92,709	
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Food	13,700	13,182				13,182	518	
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	24,648	24,455				24,455	193	
Utensils & Tools	6,500	5,641				5,641	859	
Other Supplies & Services	5,500						5,500	
Total Relief items, Construction, Supplies	50,348	43,279				43,279	7,069	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Storage		1,076				1,076	-1,076	
Distribution & Monitoring	1,250	3,426				3,426	-2,176	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	7,000	5,549				5,549	1,451	
Logistics Services	596	867				867	-271	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	8,846	10,918				10,918	-2,072	
Personnel								
National Society Staff	9,525	9,147				9,147	378	
Total Personnel	9,525	9,147				9,147	378	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	10,000	6,446				6,446	3,554	
Total Workshops & Training	10,000	6,446				6,446	3,554	
General Expenditure								
Travel	3,000	1,283				1,283	1,717	
Information & Public Relation	1,500	392				392	1,108	
Office Costs	1,331	1,288				1,288	43	
Communications	1,500	491				491	1,009	
Financial Charges	1,000	1,738				1,738	-738	
Total General Expenditure	8,331	5,193				5,193	3,138	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Service Support	5,658	4,874				4,874	784	
Total Indirect Costs	5,658	4,874				4,874	784	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	92,709	79,857				79,857	12,852	
VARIANCE (C - D)		12,852				12,852		