



## COSTA RICA: FLOODS

**DREF Bulletin**  
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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 78,658 (USD 67,172 or EUR 47,384) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) for relief operations in Costa Rica to assist 3,750 beneficiaries (750 families). This operation is expected to be implemented in three months and will be completed by 23 January 2008; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 23 April 2008). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

[Click here to go directly to the attached map](#)

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](#)

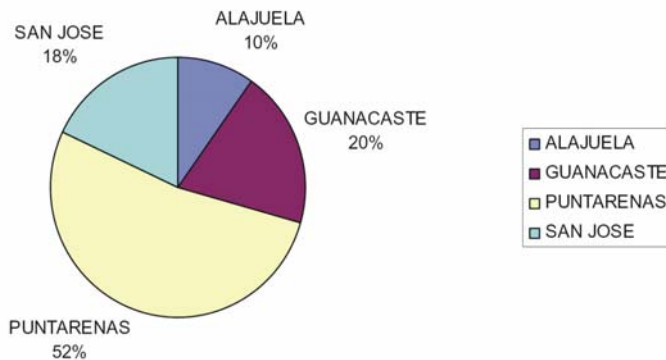
*Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*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

Since 12 October, Costa Rica has been affected by various atmospheric disturbances such as the passing of a tropical wave and a direct influence of a low pressure system. These events have provoked intense and continuous rain in the Pacific coast area and the central valley causing floods in the communities of the Brunca, Huetar Norte, Los Santos, Central Pacific and Chorotega regions. The rains are still affecting the entire country. The most affected provinces are San Jose, Alajuela, Puntarenas, Guanacaste and Cartago. The National Meteorology Institute forecasts strong to moderate rain throughout the entire Pacific slope.

**Affected provinces**



The National Commission for Emergency and Risk Prevention (Comision Nacional de Prevención de Riesgos y Atención de Emergencias – CNE) informed that there are at least 96 communities whose infrastructure and livelihoods have been deeply affected by the floods and landslides. 18 casualties and approximately 12,000 affected people were reported. There are 33 temporary shelters that accommodate 2,108 people since 17 October. Preliminary reports indicate 1,487 houses have sustained damages while four houses were completely destroyed. In addition, 93 roads and highways have sustained minor damages

*Graph shows the provinces most affected. Source: National Commission for Emergency Risk Prevention.*

while others have been obstructed by mud and debris due to landslides. Emergency assistance has been difficult to carry out since the main road between Guanacaste, Puntarenas and San Jose is obstructed. A total of 44 bridges and 27 sewer systems have also been affected in various communities in the provinces of Guanacaste, Puntarenas and San José.

The Costa Rican government declared a red alert for the Central Pacific, Brunca and Chorotega regions. They also activated the emergency committees in the affected areas as well as the Information and Analysis Centre. Coordination meetings have been held between the Emergency Center (Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia, COE) and CNE in order to organize the immediate needs for the affected people. The government has supplied 1,989 food parcels, 2,008 mattresses, 3,245 blankets, drinking water and other relief items to the most affected regions totalling CHF 18,400. Search and rescue activities have begun in the sector of Atenas and Barrio Fátima. The CNE has also mobilized heavy machinery to commence clearing up debris from the roads and



*Floods have obstructed main roads in Costa Rica. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*

highways. In addition, CNE is performing needs and damage assessments in order to indicate the most immediate needs of the affected population.

## Red Cross action

Since the onset of the emergency, the Costa Rican Red Cross (CRC) has been monitoring and performing rescue and evacuation activities due to the constant rains throughout the Central Pacific region. All CRC local branches in the affected regions as well as the COE have been activated. Three National Intervention Teams (NIT) have been supporting the CRC emergency activities. Approximately 600 volunteers are providing assistance to the affected areas. Rescue teams and officials have been deployed to the affected areas to supervise the operation and to perform need and damage assessments. PADRU will coordinate deployment of personnel and/or Regional Intervention Teams (RIT's) if needed.

## The needs

### Immediate needs:

The CRC Plan of Action (PoA) requests as their immediate needs:

- Water and Sanitation (20 liter containers)
- Food parcels
- Blankets
- Mattresses
- Cleaning kits
- Hygiene kits
- Latrines
- Kitchen kits
- Clothes
- Logistics and Operative support



*Rescue activities from the Costa Rican Red Cross 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 seeks to support immediate response activities for the communities who have not received immediate assistance in the province of Guanacaste in Costa Rica.**

Objectives and planned activities will be adjusted in line 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: 750 families (3,750 beneficiaries) will benefit from the provision of relief items to recover from the effects of the floods.**

The CRC PoA will procure and distribute the most immediate needs which are:

- Cleaning kits
- Hygiene kits

- Kitchen kits
- Blankets
- Food parcels
- Mattresses

These relief items will be procured locally and will seek to adhere to the SPHERE project humanitarian charter.

**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



*Rescue activities from the Costa Rican Red Cross Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*

### **Communications and coordination**

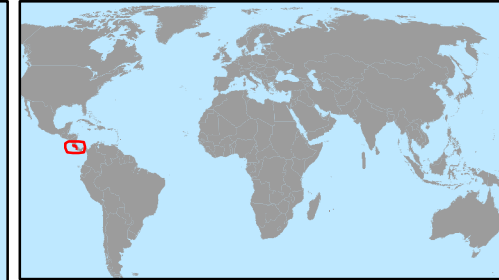
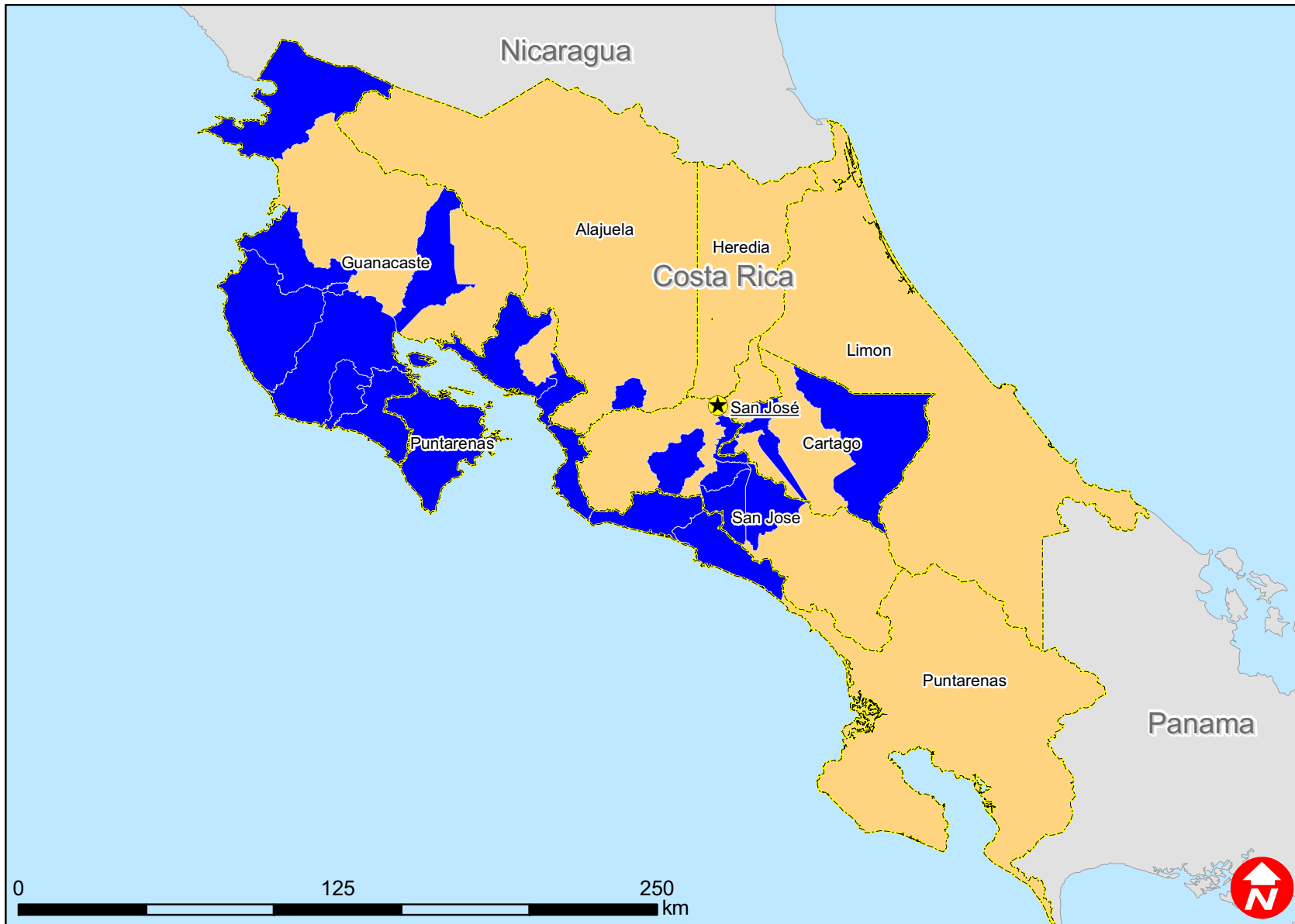
Maintaining a steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders is vital for fundraising, advocacy and maintaining the profile of emergency operations. During an operation, communications between affected populations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as well 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 to increase the visibility of their actions in regards to the communication through the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), the Regional Representation Office for Central America and Mexico in Panama 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.




Several reports have been issued through the Disaster Management Information System (DMIS) on the global Federation website.

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



# Costa Rica: Floods



-  Capitals
-  Affected cantones
-  Provinces

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, DEVINFO, Federation