

# DREF Bulletin Update



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## PANAMA: FIRES

**DREF Bulletin**  
**no. MDRPA003**  
**Update no. 1**  
**16 April 2007**

*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

Period covered by this update: 23 March to 16 April 2007.

History of this Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)-funded operation:

- CHF 7,500 (USD 6,189 or EUR 4,634) from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 21 March, 2007 to respond to the needs of this operation.
- This operation is expected to be implemented for 1 month, and will be completed by 21 April, 2007; a DREF Bulletin Final Report (narrative and financial) will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 21 July, 2007).

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its 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.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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

At approximately 4:30 a.m. on Wednesday 21 March 2007, a fire occurred in sector C of the Curundú neighbourhood, located in Panama City, Panama. Authorities cordoned off the area to facilitate the assessments, after which it was determined that the fire devastated more than 137 houses, left about 725 people affected and killed three minors.

In response to the fire, the Office of the First Lady activated its stock centre located in the city's Omar Park. In addition, the Ministries of Housing and Social Development, the Mayor's Office and the Community Council among others, have organized the implementation of surveys in the area. The Ministry of Health assigned a mobile clinic with medical staff to provide first aid care to the affected population.

During the emergency, the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) dispatched rescue, health and first aid staff – as well as ambulances - to provide assistance to the beneficiaries of the operation. The National Society helped with transferring patients to medical centres and provided direct health assistance such as psycho-social support and attention to skin burns and superficial skin cuts.

The Ministry of Housing, the Curundú Community Council, the National System of Civil Protection (Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil- SINAPROC), the Ministry of Social Development (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social –MIDES), the Ministry of Housing (Ministerio de Vivienda – MIVI), the Ministry of Health (Ministerio de Salud – MINSAs), the RCSP and other organizations worked in close coordination in order to address the main needs of the affected population.



**Fire brigade, SINAPROC and Red Cross providing search and rescue, need assessments and first aid care in the affected area.**

## Red Cross action

The Red Cross Society of Panama supported the activities carried out by the government, such as search and rescue, needs assessments, health assistance and psychosocial support. There was close coordination with the Mayor's office, community leaders, SINAPROC and other governmental and non governmental institutions in the field.

### Beneficiaries

The operation seeks to assist 150 families that were affected by the fire as selected by the Local Committee of the RCSP and in line with the needs that were identified during the surveys.

### Relief

The Red Cross Society of Panama, with the assistance from the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), has achieved the following:

**Objective: 150 families affected by the fire (725 beneficiaries) see their immediate needs met through the distribution of 150 kitchen kits and 300 blankets (2 per family) to help them recover from the emergency.**

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On 22 March (one day after the emergency) a joint distribution between SINAPROC and RCSP took place, covering the main needs of the 150 families (725 beneficiaries) with kitchen sets, blankets, water, hygiene kits, mattresses, food items and clothes.

The relief items distributed by RCSP - a total of 150 kitchen sets and 300 blankets - as well as the transportation and distribution costs were covered by DREF funding.

In addition, RCSP carried out a solidarity campaign amongst the Panamanian population, which made possible to distribute additional relief items such as water (water tanks for all 150 families), clothing (new and used), mattresses (80 units) and special items for students (back packs and uniforms). The distribution of school uniforms and materials was directly coordinated with the Ministry of Education.



**Federation relief items being distributed in coordination with SINAPROC**

**Coordination**

The Red Cross Society of Panama worked closely with the Ministries of Housing, Social Development, Health and SINAPROC in carrying out the damage and needs assessments and the distribution of the relief items, during which each institution complemented the other. In addition, the Ministry of Health and the RCSP carried out the beneficiary survey and worked together to coordinate health and care activities.

From the onset of the disaster the National Society has been in close contact and coordination with Federation's PADRU and received support in developing activities such as the Plan of Action. Furthermore, the United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Risk, Emergency and Disaster Task Force (REDLAC) members were informed about the actions taken by RCSP during this disaster.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

The National Society provided support staff for the implementation of the described activities. The RCSP, with support of the Federation monitored the situation in coordination with main actors involved in the operation.

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