

DREF operation



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Panama: Floods

DREF operation n° MDRPA005
GLIDE n° FL-2009-000252-PAN
26 November 2009

The International Federation's 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 response to emergencies. 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.

CHF 55,038 (USD 54,459 or EUR 36,425) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Red Cross Society of Panama in replenishing relief items distributed from prepositioned stocks to assist some 1,250 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

Summary: Since 19 November 2009, a high pressure system in the low and medium level of the atmosphere in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea has caused heavy rain affecting several regions in Panama with floods. This DREF Bulletin focuses on a summary of the event, and the concrete relief action planned to be taken with the DREF support.



Flooding in the Province of Darien: Source: www.telemetro.com

This operation is expected to be implemented by the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) over three months, and will therefore be completed by 25 February 2010; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 25 May 2010).

[<click here for the DREF budget, here for contact details, or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

Since 19 November, a high pressure system located over the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea has caused heavy rain in Central America. According to the National Civil Protection System (Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil, SINAPROC), this phenomenon produced heavy rain and floods. Rivers overflowed and floods caused landslides mainly affecting the provinces of Darien and Colón. These provinces sustained damages to the housing sector, basic services, infrastructures and family livelihoods. It is difficult to access to the most affected areas, since they can only be reached by air, or by walking through the flooded rivers. In the province of Darien, 4,138 people have been affected by the overflowing of four rivers. According to SINAPROC, 70 percent of the agricultural production has been damaged.

SINAPROC considers that the agricultural sector and livelihoods have been much affected in the province of Darien and further information will be available once detailed assessments are completed. The Civil Protection has started providing assistance to the people affected in the Darien by distributing food parcels, water and water purification tablets.

According to preliminary assessments from SINAPROC, a number of communities in Darien were affected by the overflowing of four rivers: Rio Chico, Rio Tupiza, Rio Tuqueza and Rio Chucunaque, whilst other communities were affected by floods given the heavy rainfall.

The following table shows the level of damage by community in Darien:

Communities	Affected houses	Houses with structural damages	Affected people
Barranquillita	36	1	
Bajo Chiquito	50		300
Peña Vijagual	31	3	170
Saboga	36		75
Mortí	50		600
Corozal	54		356
Naranjal	50	1	345
Boca de Río Tigre	46		246
TOTAL	353	5	2,092

SINAPROC informs that heavy rain and floods also affected the province of Colon, mainly in the community of Eyadrua. 30 families (110 people: 60 children between 0 to 17 years; 50 adults between 18 and 60 years) were affected. In the district of Portobelo, 20 families from the communities of Buena Ventura, Bello Horizonte, Valle de la Media Luna and Maria Soto were affected by floods and landslides. Roads were blocked for a period of eight hours.

Coordination and partnerships

The Red Cross Society of Panama has been coordinating activities and reviewing assessment information with SINAPROC and the Ministry of Health. SINAPROC and the government are providing safe water to the most affected people. The Ministry of Agricultural Development (Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario) is carrying out assessments in the affected areas to obtain details of the damage to agricultural production and housing. In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is providing technical advice. USAID and the Panama Canal Authority (Autoridad del Canal de Panama, ACP) are present in the community of Embera in the province of Colon where tourism projects are being developed.

The International Federation, through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Regional Representation for Central America and Mexico is communicating with and providing support to the National Society. Technical support is provided by a disaster management delegate from PADRU and possible deployment is foreseen to the affected areas.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the onset of the emergency the Red Cross Society of Panama has been responding to situation by carrying out search and rescue, evacuations and first aid activities in the affected areas. Damage assessments have been carried out in coordination with the Emergency Operations Centre (Centro de Operaciones de Emergencia, COE) established in the town of Yaviza in the province of Darien.

There are currently 25 volunteers from the branches of Real and Meteti in Darien responding to the emergency in coordination with the COE. The COE of the National Society has been in permanent contact

with the health and police authorities including SINAPROC and the International Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit.

In line with the initial assessments carried out, the National Society has drawn up a plan of action to meet the basic needs of 200 families (with food and non food items) in the province of Darien and 50 families (with non food items) in the province of Colon.



An affected community in Colon
Source: La Prensa

The needs

Selection of people to be reached:

The 250 families benefited will be selected in coordination with local authorities and other entities ensuring that humanitarian aid is focused on the most vulnerable groups. The criteria for selection will be:

- a) Families that were directly affected by the floods and have difficulty in recovering rapidly due to their economic status.
- b) Single mothers with children.
- c) People with disabilities.
- d) Children and the elderly.
- e) Families that lost their livelihoods.
- f) Communities located in rural areas with difficult access.

International Federation standards including the SPHERE minimum standards will be adhered to in carrying out this operation.

The proposed operation

Global Objective

To provide humanitarian assistance to the people most affected by the floods to help them to return to their daily lives.

The Red Cross Society of Panama drew up a plan of action that includes the distribution of essential relief items to 200 families (with food and non food items) in the province of Darien and 50 families (with non food items) in the province of Colon. This DREF operation will cover all operational costs of the National Society.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: 250 of the most affected families in the provinces of Darien and Colón will receive food parcels and essential relief items to assist them to return to their daily lives.

Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Develop a beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Local procurement of food items and items for children's kits.
- Dispatch of relief items from the Regional Logistics Unit in Panama to Darien and Colon.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.
- Develop an exit strategy.

250 families in Darien (200 families) and Colon (50 families) will receive: tarpaulins, mosquito nets, blankets, plastic buckets, kitchen kits, jerry cans, hygiene kits and children's kits. Food parcels will be distributed to 200 families in Darien only, since assessments indicate that Colon does not require food items.

The Red Cross Society of Panama had a stock of relief items pre-positioned in the Pan American Disaster Response Unit. To date, the relief items mentioned above have been dispatched for 50 families in Colón. The remaining items for 200 families will be dispatched by the end of this week. This DREF operation will be used to replenish the pre-positioned stock of the National Society in addition to covering the local procurements of food parcels and children's kits.

Due to the isolated areas and inaccessibility of communities in the province of Darien, the National Society expects minor challenges in the distribution activities. Security issues are being taken into account through the use of clear visibility materials, since the province of Darien borders with Colombia.

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 is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities 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.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **In Panama:** José Beliz, General Director of Red Cross Society of Panama; phone: (507) 315 1389; email: cruzroja@pa.gbnet.cc.
- **In Panama:** Mauricio Bustamante, Acting head of the Pan American Disaster Response Unit, (507) 316 1001; fax: (507) 316 1082; email: Mauricio.bustamante@ifrc.org.
- **In Panama:** Francisco Maldonado, Disaster Management Delegate, Pan American Disaster Response Unit; phone: (507) 316 1001; fax: (507) 316 1082; email: Francisco.maldonado@ifrc.org.
- **In Panama:** Fabricio Lopez, Regional Representative for Central America and Mexico; phone: (507) 380 0250; fax: (507) 317 1304; email: fabricio.lopez@ifrc.org.
- **In Panama:** Maria Alcázar, Zone Resource Mobilization Coordinator, Americas; phone: (507) 380 0250; fax: (507) 317 1304; email: maria.alcazar@ifrc.org.
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[<DREF budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

DREF OPERATION BUDGET SUMMARY
PANAMA FLOODS 2009

Annex 1
MDRPA005

	BUDGET CHF
<u>RELIEF NEEDS</u>	
Shelter	4,328
Construction Materials	
Clothing & Textiles	4,863
Food	7,129
Seeds & Plants	
Water & Sanitation	0
Medical & First Aid	
Teaching Materials	
Utensils & Tools	9,573
Other Supplies & Services	10,694
Total Relief Needs	36,587

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

Land & Buildings
Vehicles Purchase
Computers & Telecom Equipment
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.
Medical Equipment
Other Machinery & Equipment

TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES

Storage - Warehouse
Distribution & Monitoring
Transport & Vehicles Costs
Service fee & Recovery

PERSONNEL

International Staff
Regionally Deployed Staff
National Staff
National Society Staff
Consultants

WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

Workshops & Training

GENERAL EXPENSES

Travel
Information & Public Relations
Office running costs
Communication Costs
Professional Fees
Financial Charges
Other General Expenses

PROGRAMME SUPPORT

Programme Support - PSR

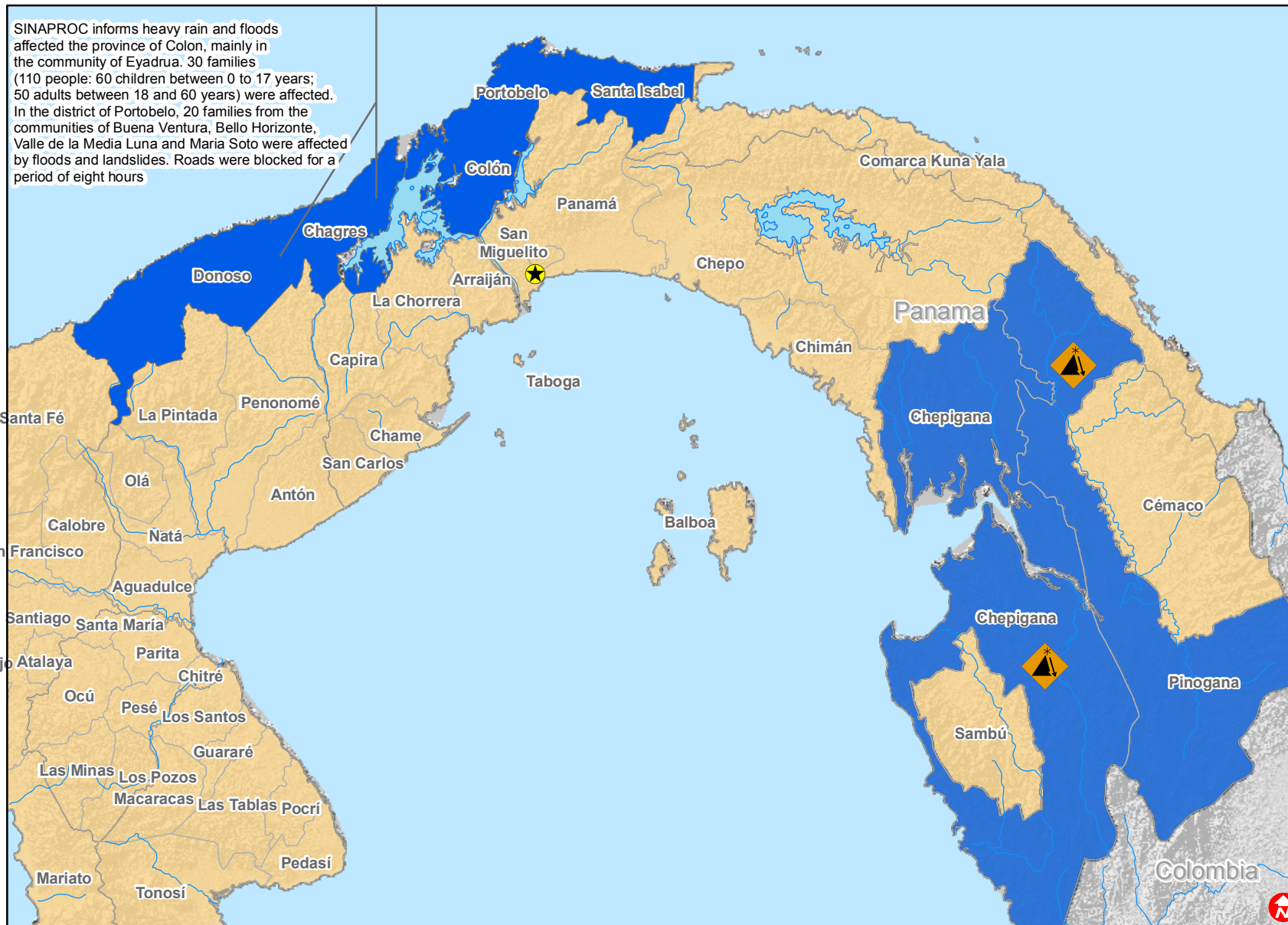
Total Operational Needs **18,450**

DREF ALLOCATION **55,038**



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- Capitals
- Rivers
- Lakes
- Districts
- Provinces
- Most flooded areas
- Landslides

Floods caused landslides mainly affecting the provinces of Darien and Colon. These provinces sustained damages including the housing sector, basic services, infrastructures and family livelihoods. It is difficult to access to the most affected areas, since it can only be reached by air or walking through the overflowed rivers.

4,138 people have been affected by the overflowing of four rivers in the province of Darien. According to SINAPROC 70 percent of the agricultural production was damaged. The Civil Protection has started providing assistance to the people affected in Darien by distributing food parcels, water and water purification tablets.