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DREF Operation Final Report

Panama: Population Movement

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF Operation	Operation no. MDRPA011
Date of issue: 10 June 2016	Date of emergency: 15 November 2015
Operation start date: 1 December 2015	Operation end date: The operation was extended one month until 22 March 2016 (original: 11 February 2016).
Host National Society: Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP)	Operation Budget: 31,124 Swiss francs (CHF)
Number of people affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluctuating migrant population (1,500 to 2,500) Population from districts of Progreso and Puerto Armuelles (5,000) 	Number of people to be assisted: 2,500
National Societies participating in the Operation: Red Cross Society of Panama through its local branches in transit areas of this population movement.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: The National Border Service (SENAFRONT); National Air and Naval Service (SENAN); Christian Pastoral; The National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC); Ministry of Health; Panamanian Immigration Service; Panamanian Customs; Social Security Fund; Caritas; International Organization for Migration (OIM); diverse protestant churches, as well as private sector support.	

[<Click here for the contact information. Click here for the final financial report>](#)

Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

This operation responded to the movement of Cuban nationals through Panama. This population movement, which began in mid-November 2015, has involved passage through Ecuador and Colombia and continued unabated throughout the duration of this operation. This constant influx of migrants has led to a situation in which the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) continues to provide humanitarian support following the end of this DREF operation.

The migration flows were affected by the closure of the Nicaraguan border in November 2015 and the Costa Rican border the following month in December 2015. The National Society worked to adapt to the changing humanitarian needs of this population.

The wave of migrants arriving in Paso Canoas increased concurrently with the departure of other migrants from Puerto Obaldía and the arrival of other migrants who had been in Panama City in the Chiriquí province. Flights to Mexico departed from the Chiriquí province, which increased the flow of migrants into the province.

The Costa Rican Red Cross issued an emergency appeal (MDRCR014) for the population movement in Costa Rica; it is planned that part of the CHF 602,895 budget will support the Red Cross Society of Panama's humanitarian actions on the Panamanian – Costa Rican border.

Following migrants' departure from Puerto Obaldía and arrival in Paso Canoas due to the closing of the Nicaraguan and Costa Rican borders, the National Society was required to adapt to the changing scenario and humanitarian needs.

In line with the plan of action for this operation, the RCSP distributed water, water purifiers and personal hygiene kits (modified from those for families to individual migrants) and provided psychosocial support (modified from the initial plan for children to better attend adult needs). The uncertainty regarding their future, financial constraints to remain in the waiting regions (Puerto Obadía) for extended periods and other factors have generated stress and challenges to their mental health.

Information on the situation of migrants was transmitted to the RCSP soliciting its help in compliance with its auxiliary role to the State on humanitarian issues. Psychosocial support (PSS) workshops began, as well as individual psychological care for some of the migrants. Furthermore, HIV-positive people identified themselves and assistance was provided so they could continue their medication.



The RCSP provided humanitarian support to migrants in Puerto Obaldía. Source: RCSP

After having delivered the care provided for in the emergency plan of action, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) learned that the flights to Mexico would begin as of 28 February 2016. The uncertainty experienced by the migrants was significant, especially those whose statuses remained unclear due to their lack of resources to purchase airline tickets. Some engaged in informal employment to earn some travel money. Sufficient food that met minimum standards was another challenge since in Paso Canoas only the National Society, Caritas, SENAFRONT, and Panama's Immigration Service directly provided food. By 20 April 2016, 2,500 Cubans were in Paso Canoas, with an average of 100 arriving daily from Puerto Obaldía, which further strained already limited resources. .

The proliferation of mosquitoes led to health authorities issuing a national alert. As a result, fumigation and cleaning campaigns

commenced throughout the country.

Panama reached an agreement with Mexico in late January 2016. As part of this agreement, Panama's Immigration Service provided a list of 1,301 Cuban nationals, but in reality this amount rose by 30 per cent in Paso Canoas, without taking into account those who were en route from Puerto Obaldía.

To date, nine Cubans are reported to have remained in Paso Canoas; the Panamanian government has issued them humanitarian visas. Panama has closed its main border posts with Colombia (Darién and Puerto Obaldía) and with Costa Rica to Cuban migrants. Since the border closure, there have been reports of an influx of Cuban migrants and hundreds of Cubans are currently stranded on the Colombia side of the border region.

Summary of response

Overview of Host National Society

Barú Red Cross Branch

The RCSP branch in Barú conducted the following actions:



RCSP conducted a massive vaccination campaign for volunteers and migrants against AH1N1 in the Progreso collective centre. Source: RCSP

- Activation of security protocols in this sector for volunteer and paid staff.
- Constant communication with government institutions (Ministries of the Interior and Health, SENAFRONT and others)
- Mass vaccination of all Barú branch staff
- Provision of basic healthcare and first aid to migrants in Progreso and Milenium collective centres.
- Implementation of all alert and prevention measures for ambulances and equipment required for possible cases of AH1N1 or other diseases such as the Zika virus.

- Preparation and distribution of meals for all Cuban migrants, including newly arriving Cuban migrants who were not on any Immigration Service lists.
- Management the collective centres in Progreso, Hotel Canarias, Hotel La Morenita, and Hotel Milenium

- Creation and maintenance of migrant registry in the collective centres, which was thoroughly checked during meal times

The RCSP branch in Barú provided lunch and dinner in the collective centres until March. Following the Panamanian government's decision to stop providing food in an effort to close the collective centres, the RCSP was only able to provide one meal daily in March and April. This RCSP branch provided more than 22,000 food rations to the Cuban migrants under its care, independent of their registry on the Panama's Immigration Service's lists. Caritas and the RCSP joined efforts to provide food to Cuban migrants that were not on any of the lists and to the newly arriving migrants. Caritas donated the food and it was picked up by Red Cross staff in David, Panama.

Overview of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in the country

Since November 2015, the Shelter Cluster Americas convened by the IFRC, has been monitoring the situation of Cuban migrants in transit countries between Ecuador to Mexico. The IFRC, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) conducted two joint missions to the border areas of Paso Canoas to monitor the situation and provide technical assistance on camp management, shelter and protection in the collective centres set up by the National Civil Protection System; the IFRC's Disaster Law Programme also participated in the two missions. Part of this technical support was to provide joint training in collective centre management to the RCSP branch in Barú and to their counterparts across the border working for the Costa Rican Red Cross. As a result of the missions, the shelter cluster produced an official advisory note with cross-sector recommendations to the Panamanian government.

Overview of non-Red Cross Red Crescent actors in the country

During the initial stage of the emergency response in Paso Canoas, the Catholic Church provided facilities to house the migrant population and prepared food and the Immigration Service provided food to migrants on their list. In Puerto Obaldía, the population was housed in two groups of large tents. SENAFRONT provided security for the food storage and in Paso Canoas and Puerto Obaldía daily collected garbage from the collective centres and supported RCSP staff by providing them with daily transportation to and from their accommodations. SINAPROC provided food and mattresses in the initial stages of the operation. Caritas Social Pastoral in David and Panama City provided food and medication that was not available through the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health conducted a mass Influenza vaccination campaign, as well as a campaign to eliminate breeding sites for *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito, which is the vector for dengue, chikungunya, and the Zika virus. Throughout the country and in Paso Canoas in particular, the RCSP supported the provision of care to people living with HIV/AIDS. The Social Security Fund contributed to the provision of care for people affected by AH1N1 and other illnesses, as well as free medication. The Social Security Administration (CSS) provided free medical services and hospital care.

The Office of the President of the Republic rented three hotels and used a community sports centre to as collective centres for the migrant population in Paso Canoas.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

Services provided

- First aid care to migrants
- Logistical support to staff in areas with government-established collective centres
- Humanitarian aid distribution
- Transport to hospitals
- Hygiene promotion and waste management
- Prevention of AH1N1 Influenza for migrants and communities
- Psychosocial support and individual attention
- Provision of food to migrants not on the Immigration Service's list
- Collective centre management in Paso Canoas and feeding programmes



The RCSP provided psychosocial support in a park in Puerto Obaldía. Source: RCSP

Human Resources

The National Society mobilized 75 volunteers from its branches in Barú, David, Santiago, Colon, and national headquarters. These volunteers were social workers, psychologists, emergency medical technicians, auxiliary medical emergency staff, emergency vehicle operators, first aid workers, health promoters, volunteers with more generalized skill sets as well as members of the National Intervention Team (NIT) in logistics and others in water and sanitation (WATSAN).

Logistics and supply chain

All purchases were made locally from National Society suppliers. Procurement was monitored by the National Society accounting department in line with IFRC standards.

Communications

The National Society used social networks to disseminate the actions that were implemented in each area. The DREF did not cover the dissemination new stories through the print media due to its high cost; however, news stories were later disseminated via the radio and the RCSP's website.

Quality programming – Areas common to all sectors

Outcome 1: The operation's implementation is managed in a coordinated manner, with an adequate implementation and monitoring system for 30 days in Puerto Obaldía	Outputs		% Achieved
	Output 1.1 : The project has been monitored and implemented as per the timeframe established in the emergency plan of action		100%
	Output 1.2: The RCSP's efforts have been disseminated via press releases to the media and the airing of key messages.		100%
Activities	Implementation on time?		% of progress
	Yes	No	
Monitoring visits from RCSP's headquarters	X		100%
Monitoring visits from the IFRC	X		100%
Preparation of internal reports	X		100%
Publication of press releases and key messages	X		80%

Achievements

Actions were carried out in border areas in order to conduct project activities on-site, and the National Society's project coordinator accompanied each visit.

The intervention in Puerto Obaldía was conducted in its entirety because the RCSP arranged for all of the items that were to be distributed (water, water purifiers, and personal hygiene kits) to be transported to the intervention area.

There were three monitoring visits from the Shelter Cluster to Paso Canoas, the Disaster Law Programme conducted one visit and the IFRC's regional disaster management coordinator for Central America, Mexico and Panama spent a week with the RCSP's Barú branch and helped finalize the transfer of funds from Costa Rican Red Cross to RCSP to address the needs of the Cuban migrants.

Challenges

The cost incurred for volunteers was greater than what was budgeted in the initial plan because activities were only planned for Puerto Obaldía; however, the rapidly changing scenario also required additional, unanticipated activities in Paso Canoas. Despite the additional activities in Paso Canoas, the plan of action did not incorporate Paso Canoas and maintained the original lines of intervention.

In April 2016, the government of Panama requested IFRC to conduct an evaluation of the government's collective centres and planned assistance to Cuban migrants. A Terms of Reference (TORs) was prepared for a multi-disciplinary and multi-sector team to provide SINAPROC with this assistance. However, due to the Ecuador earthquake and surge staff being deployed to Ecuador, the mission was delayed. By the time staff became available, the government of Panama had already negotiated successfully with the Mexican government to allow safe passage for the Cuban migrants in Panama, enabling the government to close all collective centres in Paso Canoas.

Due to the lack of sufficient funding to pay for media publications, the National Society relied on digital media and social networks to which the IFRC and RCPS communications departments had.

The short timeframe and low funding resulted in delays because the RCPS had to rely on government entities to transport these resources.

Lessons learned

Proper management of a collective centre was an important lesson learned in Paso Canoas, as well as coordination and advocacy for the adequate provision of services in collective centres, protection monitoring and advocacy on due process for forced evictions.

Health and Care

The migrants received medical attention and pre-hospital care from the RCSP branches in David, Barú, and Colon, as well as support from the Ministry of Health and the Social Security Fund.

Needs analysis: People suffering from chronic and acute illnesses in both border areas were assisted.

Population to be assisted: People with HIV/AIDS; chronic respiratory and skin diseases due to fevers and various other infections, especially in children.

Outcome 2: Contribute to hospital and pre-hospital care during thirty days for the affected population affected through support from RCSP staff, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, at the border crossing in Puerto Obaldía	Outputs		% Achieved
	Output 2.1 Pre-hospital assistance at Puerto Obaldía, with support from the Colon branch, through 1 ambulance and 20 Red Cross staff members; in Paso Canoas through 3 ambulances and 50 volunteers;		
Output 2.2 Psychosocial care at Puerto Obaldía and Paso Canoas with support from two psychologists and two volunteers trained in "return of happiness" for migrant Cuban children.			100%
Activities	Implementation on time?		% of progress
	Yes	No	
Hospital care provided to the Puerto Obaldía health centre, with support from emergency auxiliaries, in coordination with the Ministry of Health	X		100%
Pre-hospital care in Puerto Obaldía through the RCSP's branch in Colon	X		100%
PSS for migrant children and adults in Puerto Obaldía and Paso Canoas	X		100%

Workshops for adults on stress and feelings management, social values, tolerance, and assertive communication	X		100%
Achievements			
The RCSP used its ambulance service to transport migrants in need of care to hospitals and clinics; it was able to provide this service free of charge thanks to the CSS's and Ministry of Health's coverage of the costs.			
Challenges			
No challenges were reported for this sector.			
Lessons learned			
Effective measures to avoid future epidemics was an important lesson learned.			

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion

Needs analysis: The migrants in Puerto Obaldía had limited funds to cover personal hygiene costs and did not have drinking water fit for human consumption.

Population to be assisted: A total of 1,000 affected people living with no safe water, personal hygiene items nor safe drinking water for human consumption.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion			
Outcome 3 Contribute to the hydration and hygiene of 1,000 affected people	Outputs		% Achieved
	Output 3.1 Distribution of water purifying agents.		60%
	Output 3.2 Distribution of 500 personal hygiene kits		100%
	Output 3.3 Hygiene promotion activities and key messages on solid waste and excreta management		100%
Activities	Implementation on time?		% of progress
	Yes	No	
Hygiene promotion activities and hygiene kits ¹ distributed	X		100%
Information packages on proper hygiene management distributed in Paso Canoas	X		100%
Hygiene promotion workshop	X		100%
Water bottles distributed in Colon	X		100%
4,000 1-gallon-water bottles distributed in Puerto Obaldía and Paso Canoas	X		100%
3,125 350 ml-water bottles in Puerto Obaldía and Paso Canoas water bottles distributed in	X		100%
1,002 1.5 litre-water bottles distributed in Puerto Obaldía	X		100%
10 boxes of tea and 86 packages of cookies (with 12 cookies per package) distributed in Puerto Obaldía	X		100%
Achievements			

¹ The hygiene kits were donated to the operation by a corporate donor.

National Society actions in this area were conducted with existing institutional supplies and through the National Society's human resources, which provided training in each activity.

Health care was provided due to the proliferation of mosquitoes and the emergence of the Zika virus; as a result, the Red Cross Society of Panama disseminated key messages on the control of vectors, monitored the developing situation from its branches, and provided pre-hospital care along with the Ministry of Health.

Challenges

There was an insufficient number of containers at key distribution points, which did not allow for the full distribution of the water purifying agents.

Lessons learned

The need to monitor the use of distributed non-food items (NFIs) to ensure that they are distributed and people know how to use them was an important lesson learned.

Training for beneficiaries on the use of water purification kits.

The RCSP should rely on the Panamanian government to do future distributions, and it should continually monitor government-led distributions.

There needs to be adequate provision of water and toilets in collective centres to ensure good hygiene practices are conducted.

Contact Information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **In Red Cross Society of Panama:** Rosa Castillo, Director Executive; phone + +507 3151388/89 email: crppresidencia@crozrojadedepanama.org.
- **In IFRC regional office in Panama:** Omar Robinson Emergency WASH Senior Officer; phone: +507 3173050; email: omar.robinson@ifrc.org.
- **Regional Logistics Unit (RLU):** Stephany Murrilo, Regional Senior Logistics & Mobilization Officer, Phone: +507 3173050; email: Stephany.murillo@ifrc.org.
- **In IFRC regional office in Panama:** Diana Medina, Communications Unit manager for the Americas, phone: +507 317 3050 email: diana.medina@ifrc.org
- **In Geneva:** Cristina Estrada, quality assurance senior officer, phone: +41.22.730.4529, email: cristina.estrada@ifrc.org.

For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries):

- **In IFRC regional office in Panama:** Priscila Gonzalez, Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Coordinator; phone: +507 317 3050; email: priscila.gonzalez@ifrc.org.

For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **In IFRC regional office in Panama:** Alejandra Van Hensbergen, Relationship Management Senior Officer. +507 317 3050; email: alejandra.vanhensbergen@ifrc.org.



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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.

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Saving lives, changing minds.



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.

Disaster Response Financial Report

MDRPA011 - Panama - Population Movement

Timeframe: 11 Dec 15 to 11 Mar 16

Appeal Launch Date: 11 Dec 15

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2015/12-2016/4	Programme	MDRPA011
Budget Timeframe	2015/12-2016/3	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
A. Budget		31,124				31,124	
B. Opening Balance							
Income							
Other Income							
DREF Allocations		31,124				31,124	
C4. Other Income		31,124				31,124	
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)		31,124				31,124	
D. Total Funding = B +C		31,124				31,124	

* Funding source data based on information provided by the donor

II. Movement of Funds

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
B. Opening Balance							
C. Income		31,124				31,124	
E. Expenditure		-27,758				-27,758	
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		3,366				3,366	

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Budget Timeframe	2015/12-2016/3	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability		
	A					B	A - B	
BUDGET (C)			31,124			31,124		
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Food	5,130		6,223			6,223	-1,092	
Medical & First Aid	5,313		549			549	4,764	
Teaching Materials	2,155		1,349			1,349	805	
Total Relief items, Construction, Sup	12,598		8,121			8,121	4,478	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Transport & Vehicles Costs	4,802		3,777			3,777	1,025	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	4,802		3,777			3,777	1,025	
Personnel								
National Society Staff	646		1,709			1,709	-1,063	
Volunteers	4,426		9,166			9,166	-4,741	
Total Personnel	5,072		10,875			10,875	-5,804	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	1,026						1,026	
Total Workshops & Training	1,026						1,026	
General Expenditure								
Travel	3,335		2,018			2,018	1,317	
Information & Public Relations	1,129		265			265	863	
Office Costs	257		109			109	147	
Communications	544		294			294	249	
Financial Charges	308		452			452	-144	
Other General Expenses	154		152			152	1	
Total General Expenditure	5,726		3,291			3,291	2,435	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Services Support Recove	1,900		1,694			1,694	205	
Total Indirect Costs	1,900		1,694			1,694	205	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	31,124		27,758			27,758	3,366	
VARIANCE (C - D)			3,366			3,366		

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Reporting Timeframe	2015/12-2016/4	Programme	MDRPA011
Budget Timeframe	2015/12-2016/3	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	*
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

IV. Breakdown by subsector

Business Line / Sub-sector	Budget	Opening Balance	Income	Funding	Expenditure	Closing Balance	Deferred Income
BL2 - Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people							
Disaster response	31,124		31,124	31,124	27,758	3,366	
Subtotal BL2	31,124		31,124	31,124	27,758	3,366	
GRAND TOTAL	31,124		31,124	31,124	27,758	3,366	