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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Panama: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF Operation	Operation n° MDRPA012 Glide n° TC-2016-000119-PAN
Date of issue: 05 December 2016	Date of emergency: 21 November 2016
Operation manager: Felipe Del Cid, Regional Disaster Management Coordinator for Central America	Point of Contact: Sonia Heckadon – Director General – Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP)
Operation start date: 02 December 2016	Expected timeframe: 3 months (operation end date 02 March 2017)
Overall operation budget: 254,173 Swiss francs (CHF)	
Number of people affected: 3,000 families	Number of people to be assisted: 650 families (3,250 people)
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: Red Cross Society of Panama: The RCSP has 1 national headquarters and 21 branches. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), American Red Cross and the Canadian Red Cross Society	
Other partners: Ministry of Health/Social Security Fund (CSS for its acronym in Spanish), the National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC for its acronym in Spanish), National Institute of Aqueducts and Sewerage (IDAAN for its acronym in Spanish)	

<Click [here](#) for the DREF budget. Click [here](#) for the contact information and [here](#) for the map of the affected areas>

A. Situation Analysis

Description of the situation

Beginning on 12 November, a tropical wave formed in the Southwestern Caribbean Sea in front of the Coast of Panama, With stationary cloudiness and thunderstorms over the Country. Otto formed in the early morning hours of Monday, 21 November 2016 in the southern Caribbean as a tropical depression and later became a Category 1 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale on Tuesday, 22 November 2016, with sustained winds of 75 mph (120 km/h), according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s National Hurricane Centre. The subsequent floods as a result of the location of Hurricane Otto is blamed for three deaths and at least four disappearances in Panama, and it caused severe flooding and landslides in the provinces of Panama, Panama Oeste, Bocas del Toro, Colon, Chiriquí and Bocas del Toro, leading to blocked and collapsed roads and the destruction of some houses. On 22 November 2016, Panama's president placed the country under alert in order to ready all of its national response organizations for the emergency, and schools were closed by presidential decree throughout Panama on Wednesday, 23 November 2016; however, they reopened the following day, with the exception of some schools in the provinces of Colon and Bocas del Toro that were damaged by the hurricane. Moreover, public offices were reopened in the province of Bocas del Toro, the collective centres in the provinces of Chiriquí and Bocas del Toro were closed, the red alert for the province Bocas del Toro and the Caribbean coast were downgraded to yellow, and the nationwide alert was downgraded to green; the yellow alert is being maintained due to the heavy rainfall in mountainous areas, while the green alert is in effect for the country due to the danger that the heavily saturated soil still presents to the general public and property.

Summary of current response

Overview of the National Society:

The RCSP is made up of 21 branches, which are grouped in ten provinces



- Province 1:** Bocas Del Toro
- Province 2:** Coclé
- Province 3:** Colon
- Province 4:** Chiriquí
- Province 5:** Darien
- Province 6:** Herrera
- Province 7:** Los Santos
- Province 8:** Panamá
- Province 9:** Veraguas
- Province 10:** Panama Oeste

As an auxiliary to the government, the RCSP works in coordination with the Panamanian government to prepare and protect communities and individuals in the face of emergencies. The Red Cross Society of Panama undertakes to raise awareness of the risks and develop practical actions to reduce them; it also defends and advises technically on the development of laws, regulations and standards that facilitate actions in the case of large-scale emergencies.

Summary of current response

Overview of the National Society:

Through local RCSP branches in the areas of Barú, Las Cumbres, Aguadulce, Chitré, Las Tablas, Villa de Los Santos, Chepo, La Chorrera, 24 de Diciembre, Changuinola, Almirante, Guabito, Colón and the headquarters in Albrook have been responding to humanitarian aid actions to ensure the protection of the lives of those affected by the heavy rains and landslides that occurred in recent days; the RCSP is working in close collaboration with government emergency operations centre (EOC) and the SINAPROC Joint Task Force (FTC for its acronym in Spanish), which was convened by the Presidency of the Republic to respond to the emergency.

On 18 November 2016, the National Society deployed a local assessment team to respond to areas affected by heavy rainfall and strong winds, ensure care and evacuate the wounded and conduct rapid emergency assessments.

On 20 November 2016, the RCSP activated its National Intervention Teams (NITs) and deployed them to Puerto Armuelles to carry out assessments and distributions of humanitarian aid to the affected areas.

Since that day, the RCSP's headquarters has supported the field team that is conducting the assessments, which will be incorporated into the emergency reports and posted on the Disaster Management Information System (DMIS).

The RCSP has a strategic warehouse in the Howard area in Panama City to provide support during the emergency, and humanitarian assistance to 182 families; to date, the support has consisted of the provision of hygiene kits, repellent and bottled water to the affected families, which expected to be supported by and later expanded to affected communities at the national level once the RCSP receives the Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) funds.

Date	Location	Affected families	People	Comments	Actions Taken
20/11/2016	La Villa	22 families	91 people		22 hygiene kits were sent and distributed
22/11/2016	Barú	372 families	1,627 people	3 collective centres, estimated number of people in centres: 222	160 hygiene kits were sent
22/11/2016	Chorrera: 6 Places affected:	60 families affected, it is estimated	An estimated 300 people	Flooding from the overflow of rivers overflow; lost all their	Talks delivered on prevention and evacuation to families in

	that at least 50 have been evacuated, especially in Mastranto, Puente Velásquez, Barriada Flamenco	belongings Housed in a school.	4 neighbourhoods.
Total	454	2,018	

Movement Coordination:

The RCSP has been coordinating its actions with the IFRC's regional office for the Americas in Panama through the IFRC's disaster management delegate for the Americas, who has been monitoring actions from the onset of the emergency, providing support to the assessments and the drafting of the EPoA and sharing information with the Movement stakeholders and regional National Societies; the IFRC has been providing communications support for key messages focused on hurricane preparedness in particular, and the RCSP has held regular meetings with the IFRC's country cluster coordinator for Panama. The National Society has also been coordinating with the American Red Cross, the ICRC and the Canadian Red Cross Society, which are available to the RCSP to support the implementation of its humanitarian relief actions; the ICRC has offered logistical support in transportation and restoring family links (RFL), and the American Red Cross has made telecommunication and technical equipment available to the National Society to support its actions.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in the country:

Ministry of Health/Social Security Fund: The Ministry of Health has strengthened its network, evacuated some health centres that were affected by the storm, and mobilizing its personnel and equipment to other facilities in Colón, Portobelo, where it used the Cural House and the Church to provide primary care to the affected people.

SINAPROC: The National Civil Protection System has focused its actions on the establishment of a national EOC, which it has used to request information from the institutions that comprise the centre; it has also conducted timely search and rescue actions in the affected areas of

Taking specific actions in the search and rescue in the affected areas of Villa de Los Santos, Barú, Panama City, Panama Oeste, Chitré in the province of Herrera, east Panama, north Panama, Colon and Bocas del Toro.

Needs analysis, beneficiary selection and risk assessment

Health

Needs Analysis: Health Facilities have been affected, leading to the disruption of health services, supplies were lost, patient transfers had to be suspended, an increased demand has been placed on the public health system, there is an increase in vector-borne diseases, water sources have been contaminated and the flooding caused latrines to overflow, among other issues;

Additionally, the population requires psychosocial support due to the adverse effects of the flooding on their mental health.

Priority needs:

- Installations that can be serve as temporary health facilities while the damage to the health centres is repaired (Field hospitals)
- Provision of potable water to health installations
- Alternate power supply system for the installations.
- Cover the needs of special or vulnerable groups.
- Activation of the psychosocial support team

Water and Sanitation

Needs analysis: Distribution of safe water in some communities has been interrupted, and there are high levels of turbidity in the water treatment plants' water intakes, which prevent the processing of safe water. IDAAN reported the suspension of water purification in the following water treatment plants: Sabanitas, affecting the province of Colón, the Cabra Water Treatment Plant, affecting the eastern part of the province of Panama, the Las Cumbres pumping system, affecting north-eastern Panama, the Trapichito Plant, affecting the province of Panama Oeste, the Barú Water Treatment Plant, affecting Puerto Armuelles and the border area with Costa Rica.

Priority needs:

- Activate a water and sanitation team (water treatment)
- Provide safe water to affected communities
- Disinfection of contaminated areas
- Vector control
- Hygiene promotion

Shelter: Since 15 November 2016, houses in the district of San Miguelito, Colón, Barú have been affected by flooding and landslides caused by a rash of hydrometeorological events, which have saturated the soil.

Priority needs:

- Support the shelters established by the government.
- Cover the basic needs of the sheltered population.
- Distribution of tarpaulins and materials to fasten to families who lost their roofs.
- Distribution of hygiene kits and kitchen kits in the collective centres
- Provide guides and supplies to affected families for proper reconstruction or safe repair.

Communications: The deficiency of communication with RCSP branches and its field staff indicates that the communication lines, must be repaired.

Priority needs:

- Establishment of the RCSP's radio link communication network
- Increased internet speed for the timely communication of reports
- Acquisition of basic communication equipment.

Beneficiary selection:

The beneficiary population is located in the provinces of Bocas del Toro, Chiriquí, Los Santos, Colón, Panama Oeste, and Panama.

Humanitarian assistance will be provided to 650 families affected by rains and landslides in order to complement response actions and fill humanitarian gaps; these families were identified through the RCSP's assessments in the affected area

The following selection criteria was used to choose the beneficiary families:

- High number of destroyed houses,
- Low socioeconomic level,
- Women as head of household with young children.
- Older adults, pregnant women, and persons with disabilities.
- People exposed to risk to their wellbeing
- An interruption in the provision of basic services.

Risk Assessment: Rain has continued after the passage of Hurricane Otto, further soaking the ground, which has long since surpassed its absorption capacity, thereby posing a risk of flash flooding and additional landslides.

B. Strategy and operational plan

Overall objective: Provide humanitarian assistance to 650 families affected by rains and landslides in the provinces of Bocas del Toro, Colón, Los Santos, Panama Oeste and Panama.

Proposed Strategy

Coordinate with the National System of Comprehensive Risk Management and the FTC to improve the impact of the actions and ensure the best care to the affected population.

The plan of action is being developed in coordination with the National EOC and the provincial and municipal governments to ensure the relevance, identification of communities and needs, as well as the safety of those involved in the operation throughout the operation.

1. **Health:** The RCSP will mainly focus its response actions for the affected population on psychosocial support (PSS) and the promotion and prevention of diseases since the primary health care needs are being covered by the Ministry of Health/CSS. The planned health activities are the following:
 - A national workshop on psychosocial support
 - National epidemic control workshop for volunteers
 - PSS interventions in the communities identified in the emergency assessments, with 10 sessions per intervention area
 - Psychosocial support interventions for volunteers in the affected branches
 - Disease promotion and prevention interventions in the communities identified in the emergency assessments, with 10 sessions per intervention area
 - Recreational activities in communities using appropriate methodology

2. **Water and Sanitation:** The RCSP will conduct water and sanitation actions for the affected population to ensure the provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene promotion. The planned water and sanitation activities are the following:
 - Initial assessment and census of affected population, selection of beneficiaries; these activities will be conducted over a 7-day period with 3 volunteers
 - The distribution of safe water through the RCSP's mobile water treatment plant.
 - Distribution of water collecting drums, with IDAAN's support to fill and transport them
 - Sensitization campaigns on the elimination of breeding places for mosquitoes.
 - Community cleaning campaigns
 - The distribution of hygiene kits
 - The distribution of cleaning kits
 - Hygiene promotion campaigns

3. **Shelter:** The RCSP will support the government's actions through the distribution of non-food items (NFIs) such as cooking kits and blankets to the collective centres in order to improve the affected population's quality of life. A total of 650 tarpaulins and the materials to fix them to roofs for the families whose roofs were destroyed by Hurricane Otto's strong winds.

An unconditional cash transfer programme (CTP) based on a market analysis, will be conducted for 100 of the worst-affected families that lost their homes to the landslides and flooding in order to allow them to purchase necessities of priority to them, which may include additional materials to further repair their homes. The amount of USD\$250 per family is calculated based on the cost of roof sheeting (25 per family), nails, hammers and other work tools.

Operational Support Services

Human Resources

The operation requires the hiring of an operations coordinator, as well as a financial assistant and two field technicians in shelter and water and sanitation. The RCSP's headquarters will provide technical support to the implementation of the activities.

In order to implement this plan of action, the RCSP will deploy the following multidisciplinary technical team to ensure the implementation of activities:

- 100 volunteers (from the, La Villa de Los Santos, La Chorrera, Colón, Panama branches)
- An administrator or general coordinator of the operation
- A financial assistant
- Psychologists and social workers to provide psychosocial care
- Communications department personnel
- A General Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member with CTP/shelter experience for 2 months

Monitoring of the human resource processes is conducted through the RCSP's administrative structure.

Supply chain and logistics

All of the goods will be procured locally as all of the items needed for the operation are available in country, The RCSP's procurement process is managed through the Accounting Department, through which all of the necessary supplies and equipment are purchased by the branches themselves, using procedures endorsed by the IFRC.

Communication

The communication initiatives will help strengthen the National Society in information management and public relations for future emergencies. Key aspects of relief and recovery operations, including achievements, challenges, donors, support needs and beneficiaries, will be constantly promoted in through all of the National Society's relevant channels.

The following are the communications' objectives (according to their target audience):

1. Internal communication - Members of the Red Cross are fully aware of the humanitarian action of the Red Cross through communication tools that highlight the RCSP's action. For example: social networks, beneficiary stories, the National Society's web page.

2. External Communications - A series of informational products will be implemented to maintain a line of transparency and objective information in order to reach out to the general population and the people affected in particular, and to share what the Red Cross does to help those affected by emergencies; this line of intervention includes everything related to communication to promote the mobilization of resources.

For example: social networks campaign, interviews, bulletins, press releases, key messages, reactive lines, etc.

3. Documentation - Documenting support processes in emergencies provides credibility to the Red Cross in the eyes of donors and the general population

For example: videos, photographs, published news archives, stories about affected people.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER)

The risk management coordinator, in conjunction with the General Directorate and the finance coordinator, will be responsible for the monitoring and follow-up of the plan of action; additionally, the National Society's headquarters has a financial information tracking team that is responsible for ensuring the quality of the emergency reports.

The RCSP will also establish a line of communication and coordination to with the IFRC's disaster management coordinator for the Americas.

Progress reports of and the emergency reports will be prepared in a timely manner. Visits and interviews will be carried out with the beneficiaries, volunteers and the other actors that are part of the plan of action's implementation team. Lastly, in order to monitor the operational objectives' progress and achievements and make adjustments to the plan if needed, a beneficiary satisfaction survey will be carried out.

Administration and Finance

The RCSP's Financial Department has trained staff available to provide the necessary support to the lines of intervention included in the plan of action.

The financial management strategy will focus on the following points:

- a. Personnel available to work on the operation's specific aspects
- b. Comply with the issuance of reports and constant monitoring of compliance and correct use of budget allocations
- c. Inform the different coordinators of the lines of intervention on the proper utilization of the resources assigned to the plan of action.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Health

Objectives	Indicators
Outcome 1: Provide psychosocial support to relieve stress by decreasing potential long-term stress.	<p># of psychosocial support sessions provided to the affected communities.</p> <p># of volunteers at the national level who are trained in psychosocial support.</p>

Output 1.1: Psychosocial support for volunteers responsible for the implementation of the operation's activities	# of volunteers who are offered psychosocial support during and at the end of the operation # of volunteers receiving PSS after their community intervention process											
Output 1.2: Psychosocial support provided to the affected communities	# of community members involved in the PSS activities											
Activities	Nov.	December		January				Feb.				
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Training workshop on psychosocial support for volunteers												
Workshops for psychosocial support interventions in communities identified during the assessments												
Recreational activities in communities												
PSS interventions for volunteers in affected branches												

Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

Objectives	Indicators
Outcome 2: Contribute to water and sanitation actions in the affected populations, guaranteeing the supply of safe water, sanitation and hygiene promotion.	% of target population that has access to safe water % of target population that is using adequate sanitation % of target population that has received NFIs
Output 2.1: Daily access to safe water, which meets Sphere standards in terms of quantity and quality, is provided to target population	# of litres of safe water distributed Average amount of safe water distributed per person per day.
Output 2.2: Recommendations for vector control and breeding reduction are disseminated	# of households involved in one or more environmental sanitation interventions
Output 2.3: Hygiene promotion activities that meet Sphere standards	# of people reached through hygiene promotion activities # of volunteers involved in hygiene promotion activities
Output 2.4 NFIs, which meet Sphere standards, are provided to the target population	# of households provided with a set of essential hygiene items # of households trained in the use of the distributed items

Activities	Nov.		December				January				Feb.	
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Initial assessment and census of the affected population, beneficiary selection, conducted over a 7-day period with 3 volunteers												
Distribution of water collecting drums to be filled by IDAAN.												
Distribution of safe water through the RCSP's mobile water treatment plant for 30 days.												
Hygiene promotion campaigns												
Distribution of 650 cleaning kits												
Distribution of 650 hygiene kits												
Community cleaning campaigns												
Sensitization campaigns on the elimination of breeding places for mosquitoes												
Vehicle rental for 3 months												

Shelter

Objectives	Indicators											
Outcome 3: Assistance is provided on the actions carried out by the government through the distribution of non-food items to improve the quality of life of the affected families and allow them to return to their homes.	# of families receiving assistance from non-food items											
Output 3.1: 650 families in the collective centres receive non-food items	# of distributed non-food items											
Output 3.2: 650 families in the collective centres receive emergency shelter assistance (tarps, tools and fixing materials) to return to their damaged homes.	# of families that receive shelter assistance											
Activities	Nov.		December				January				Feb	
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Beneficiary selection												
Volunteer workshop on housing repair (concurrently with CTP workshop under unconditional cash component)												
Distribution of 650 plastic tarpaulins and the materials for affixing them												
Informational session on safe rebuilding techniques												
Distribution of 1,300 blankets and 650 kitchen kits in the collective centres												

Quality programming / Areas common to all sectors

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS			
Outcome 4: A proper management, communication and support system is used for the implementation of the operation.	# of assessments conducted (general and/or sectorial)			
	# of revisions made to the operational plan that are based on monitoring and evaluation information			
	At the end of the first month, a communication strategy is developed and its implementation has begun			
Output 4.1 The management of the operation is informed by a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system	Monthly monitoring report at the end of each month of the operation			
	At the end of the first month a lesson learned workshop is conducted and the results are published in Fednet			
	4 visits by staff and the administrative technician			
	One monitoring visit by the IFRC is conducted per month			
Activities	November	December	January	February
Hiring of operational staff (1 operational coordinator)	■	■		
4 monitoring visits by the IFRC		■	■	■
Monitoring visits by technical staff		■	■	■
Lesson learned workshop				■
Rapid emergency assessment	■	■		■
Develop press releases	■	■	■	■
Develop social media campaign	■	■	■	■
Develop web stories	■	■	■	■
Photo reportage		■		■

Cash transfer programming

Objectives	Indicators
Outcome 5: Affected families receive technical assistance to repair their homes.	# of families receiving assistance through CTP

Contact Information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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 (NGOs) 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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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.

DREF OPERATION

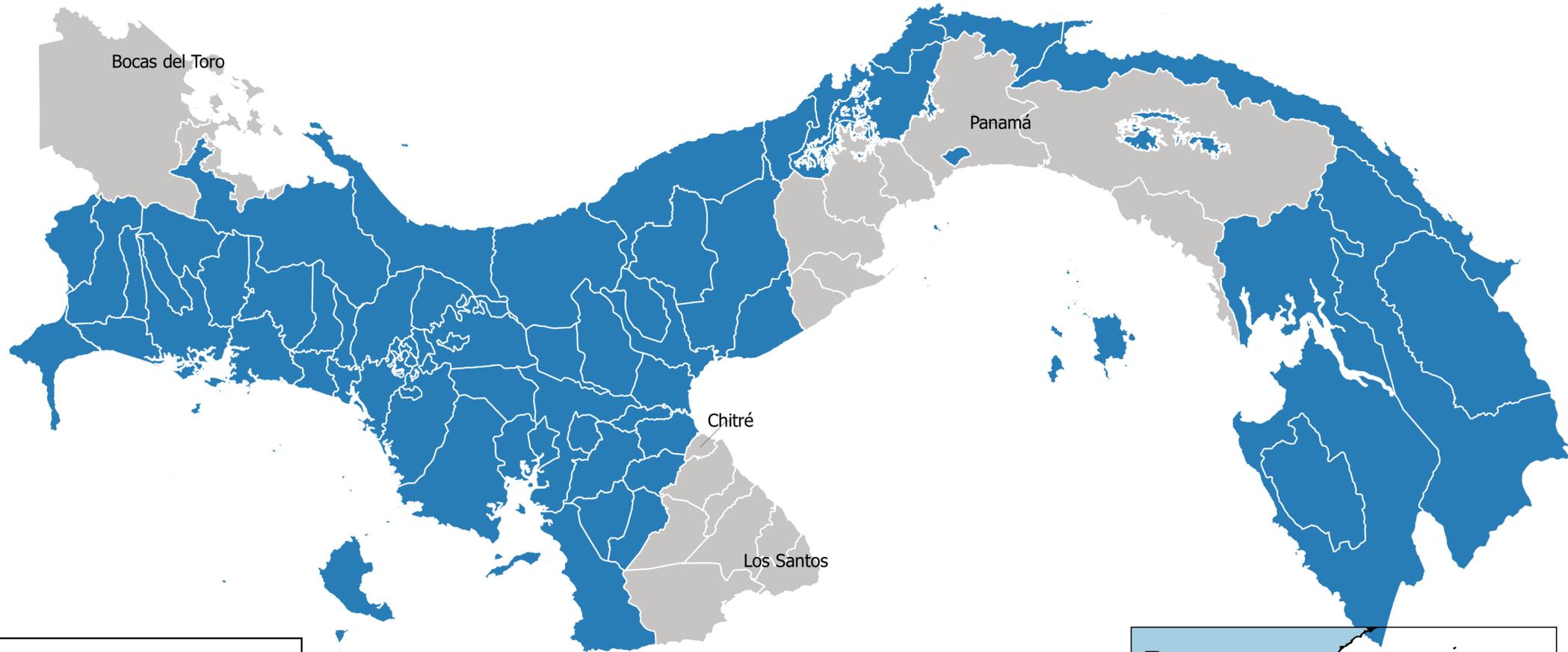
MDRPA012- Panama Hurricane Otto

05/12/2016

DREF Grant
Budget CHF

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	30,195
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Housing	25,247
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	6,564
Food	0
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	62,069
Medical & First Aid	0
Teaching Materials	11,007
Ustensils & Tools	19,692
Other Supplies & Services	0
Cash Disbursements	0
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	154,774
Land & Buildings	0
Vehicles	0
Computer & Telecom Equipment	0
Office/Household Furniture & Equipment	0
Medical Equipment	0
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	0
Transport & Vehicle Costs	13,280
Logistics Services	12,939
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	26,219
International Staff	10,906
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	9,695
Volunteers	12,934
Other Staff Benefits	3,535
Total PERSONNEL	37,070
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Workshops & Training	5,049
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	5,049
Travel	3,030
Information & Public Relations	6,766
Office Costs	2,121
Communications	2,363
Financial Charges	1,269
Other General Expenses	0
Shared Office and Services Costs	0
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	15,549
Partner National Societies	0
Other Partners (NGOs, UN, other)	0
Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS	0
Programme and Services Support Recovery	15,513
Total INDIRECT COSTS	15,513
TOTAL BUDGET	254,173

Panamá, Hurricane Otto 22 of November 2016: Affected Areas.



Legend

 Affected Areas

0 50 100 km



*Represent the increase of Guillain-Barré syndrome cases and confirmation of Zika virus in at least one case.
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.

Produced by Disaster and Crisis Department - IFRC. Source: the Red Cross Society of Panama/IFRC for Panama

