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# DREF operations update

## Costa Rica: Population Movement

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>DREF operation update no. 1</b>	<b>Operation no. MDRCR014</b>
	<b>Glide no. <a href="#">OT-2015-000157-CRI</a></b>
<b>Date of issue:</b> 23 December 2015	<b>Date of emergency:</b> 12 June 2015
<b>Operation manager:</b> Felipe Del Cid, Regional Disaster Management Coordinator for Central America; email: <a href="mailto:felipe.delcid@ifrc.org">felipe.delcid@ifrc.org</a>	<b>Point of Contact:</b> Guillermo Arroyo – National Relief and Operations Director - Costa Rican Red Cross
<b>Operation start date:</b> 22 November 2015	<b>Timeframe (revised):</b> 2 months (until 22 January 2016)
<b>Overall operation budget:</b> 51,054 Swiss francs (CHF)	
<b>Number of people affected:</b> 2,000 people	<b>Number of people to be assisted:</b> 1,000 people
<b>Host National Society:</b> Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) has 121 branches grouped into 9 regions. Regions 8 and 5, where the Costa Rican Red Cross is providing assistance, have a broad structure of volunteers, ambulances and vehicles operating to support humanitarian actions.	
<b>Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation:</b> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	
<b>Other partners:</b> The Costa Rica's General Directorate for Migration and Foreign Affairs, and the National Comprehensive Risk Management System along with all of the institutions that comprise it.	

### Summary:

On 12 November 2015, more than 1,000 Cuban nationals were reported to be camped out at Paso Canoas border crossing with Panama awaiting the issuance of a pass permit not contemplated by Costa Rican legislation. On 14 November, the Costa Rican government issued a 7-day humanitarian visa to these migrants, initiating a massive mobilization toward Peñas Blancas at the Costa Rica-Nicaragua border. However, Nicaraguan authorities closed the border; this further compounded their vulnerability due to the uncertainty caused by this refusal to let them pass and forced them to camp out near the border. For the Costa Rican authorities, this refusal involved having to set up collective centres and services to the migrants in country and possibly for the migrants that might still cross into Costa Rica.

As of 18 November 2015, it was estimated that approximately 2,000 foreigners were in La Cruz, the closest town to the Peñas Blancas border crossing with Nicaragua. The migrants have often used their limited resource, which has left them without



Costa Rican Red Cross volunteers are providing pre-hospital care to migrants. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross.

access to safe water, food and hygiene items, among other needs. Some of the collective centres are administered by the CRRC, while some migrants are either sleeping outside of customs' headquarters or other buildings. As of 21 December 2015, it was estimated that approximately 4,500 migrants are in Costa Rica, there are 30 collective centres in the border with Nicaragua. Due to the lack of support of the other countries in the region, Costa Rica has stopped its participation in the Centre American Integration System (SICA), and has decided to close the border to the migrants coming from Panama.



**The Costa Rican government has opened 30 collective centres across with border with Nicaragua.  
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross.**

The situation has worsened, especially due to the increase in the number of migrants in the Costa Rican territory and the deterioration of the relationships between the governments affected with this emergency. This has affected the humanitarian situation, and it has created the need to extend the planned intervention. As a result, some outcomes under this Plan of Action also have been adjusted after dialogue and coordination with the different agencies.

This DREF operation update reflects an extension in the timeframe of the intervention for one additional month to be able to support with the same budget, more beneficiaries. The pre-hospital care and hygiene items are still needed, although water distribution is no longer requested to the National Society. This update refers that although 1,000 beneficiaries were planned, the National Society has reached approximately 1,530 persons, and there is scope to reach at least 1,750 persons with the same sector interventions in pre-hospital care, psychosocial support and hygiene kits distribution. The delivery of safe water was stopped, because the government has requested that the National Society focus on supporting migrants with hygiene kits distribution for men. The United Nations Population Fund is in charge of providing hygiene kits needs for women.

## Coordination and partnerships

The Costar Rican Red Cross, led the planning and implementation of the operation, while the IFRC has provided support through its Pan-American Disaster Response Unit with technical guidance for development of the DREF.

The National Society coordinates with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the National Comprehensive Risk Management System along with all of the institutions that comprise it, including the Costa Rica's General Directorate for Migration and Foreign Affairs.

While working on the sector of migration, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have the purpose –individually and together with the IFRC and ICRC– to address the humanitarian concerns of migrants in need throughout their journey. They strive to provide assistance and protection to them, uphold their rights and dignity empower them in their

search for opportunities and sustainable solutions, as well as promote social inclusion and interaction between migrants and host communities.

## Operational implementation

### Overview:

1,530 migrants have been reached through the activities carried out with this DREF operation, the National Society expects to reach at least some additional 1,750 migrants through the extension of activities.

The proposed revised strategy has been oriented in two specific sectors:

**1.** Provision of pre-hospital care and psychosocial support for the migrants: 100 per cent of the initial target population has been reached in this sector. However, for the timeframe that the operation continues open, the National Society will continue providing first aid and psychosocial support as the needs still remain.

**2.** Provision of personal hygiene items to 1,000 people: this activity stands at 66 per cent completion rate. The National Society still has some kits that will be distributed to the new migrants reaching the border with Nicaragua.



**Costa Rican Red Cross volunteers are providing support in collective centres.**  
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross.

The actions that have been carried out to monitor and assess the planned operation were:

- Monitoring visits from CRRC's headquarters: Constant monitoring of the developed activities in both borders has been carried out by the CRRC, to have a proper monitoring of the operation.
- Publication of press releases and key messages: The media coverage has been constant, the actions that have been done include press releases, documentation of visual material (photographic registry and ten short videos of the migrants live stories) and visibility and comments in the social networks. The links these materials will be presented in the final report.

In addition, a lessons learned workshop will be carried out at the end of the operation.

Planned interventions	Implementation rate (%)
<b>Health and care</b>	
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Immediate affectations to the health of affected populations are attended by pre hospital care and psychosocial support at Paso Canoas and Peñas Blancas border crossings	It has been covered 100%, but during all the operation, they will keep providing these services to the migrants.
<b>Output 2.1</b> Affected populations provided with pre-hospital care in Peñas Blancas and Paso Canoas border crossings	<b>100%</b>
Activity 2.1.1 Provide pre-hospital care at Paso Canoas through care post, 3 ambulances, 1 support vehicle and 20 CRRC Members	<b>100%</b>
Activity 2.1.2 Provide pre-hospital care at Peñas Blancas through care post, 3 ambulances, 1 support vehicle and 20 CRRC members	<b>100%</b>
<b>Output 2.2</b> Psychosocial support provided to the affected migrant population in Peñas Blancas and Paso Canoa border crossing	<b>100%</b>
Activity 2.2.1 Mobilize 2 NIT members specialized in PSS to border crossings	<b>100%</b>

Activity 2.2.2 Carry out PSS activities in the 2 border crossings	100%
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**Progress towards activities:** Constant first aid actions have been carried out since the beginning of the operation. An average of 100-150 persons has been reached with first aid on a daily basis.

The most common situations attended by the pre-hospital care teams have been related to chronic diseases like diabetes, hypertension and others related to the lack of access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation facilities such as respiratory infections. At least 150 persons have been referred to health centres in the country.

Since 14 November, 11 collective centres have been established in Peñas Blancas. The Red Cross branches in the zone have been supporting the migrants. The PSS methodology "Return to happiness" has been used with the migrants in Peñas Blancas.

An average of ten volunteers has been supporting these activities daily. They have reached 1,530 people in collective centres thus far.

Water, sanitation, & hygiene promotion		
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in the two border crossings (Paso Canoas and Peñas Blancas)		66%
<b>Output 3.1</b> Distribution of safe water provided to 1,000 people (3 litres per day) <b>(now cancelled)</b>		
Activity 3.1.1 Distribution of 3 litres of water per day to 1,000 people in Paso Canoas and Peñas Blancas <b>(Cancelled)</b>		0%
<b>Output 3.2</b> Personal hygiene kits, which meet Sphere standards, are provided to 1,000 people.		
Activity 3.2.1 Distribution of personal hygiene kits to 1,000 people in Paso Canoas and Peñas Blancas		66%

The output 3.1 and activity 3.1.1 have been cancelled. Although this activity was planned in the original plan of action, after different coordination meetings with the government authorities leading the emergency response, the CRRC was requested to focus on hygiene kits distribution. Safe water is being distributed by the government. The amount originally budgeted for water distribution will now be allocated to strengthen the hygiene kits actions. The overall budget figure remains the same.

A total of 3,200 adult kits were purchased. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, the United Nations' Population Fund requested the Red Cross to focus on the distribution of hygiene kits for men. The table below presents the estimated number the kits that have been distributed per collective centre to date, reaching an estimated of 2,308 hygiene kits. Each kits last for 15 days. However, due to the mobility of the target population some men might receive a second distribution of hygiene kits if their stay at the collective centre gets extended or only one kit as they cross the border.

	District	Collective centre	No. of hygiene kits for men distributed
1	Guatuso	Tiales	35
2	Guatuso	Bijagua	106
3	Guatuso	Buena Vista	90
4	Guatuso	Salón Parroquial	48
5	Guatuso	Redondel	59
6	Guatuso	Monterrey	102
7	Guatuso	Katira	122
8	La Cruz	Shekinah	73
9	La Cruz	Col. Nocturno	340
10	La Cruz	Col. Bilingüe	284
11	La Cruz	Peñas Blancas	114
12	La Cruz	Iglesía Bíblica	31
13	La Cruz	La Garita	67

14	La Cruz	Antiguo Bomberos	61
15	Liberia	Iglesia Metodista	15
16	Liberia	Quebrada Grande	26
17	Liberia	Iglesia Bethel	52
18	Upala	Salón Multiuso	100
19	Upala	Zonzapote	56
20	Upala	Popoyuapa	24
21	Upala	Salón Comunal Po.	51
22	Upala	San Luis	34
23	Upala	Santa Rosa	148
<b>Total number of kits distributed</b>			<b>2,038</b>

## 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 (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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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.