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Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Alta Verapaz, Guatemala: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF n° MDRGT012	Glide n° FL-2017-000161-GTM
Date of issue: 10 November 2017	Expected timeframe: 3 months Expected end date: 9 February 2018
Category allocated to the disaster or crisis: Yellow	
DREF allocated: 174,052 Swiss francs (CHF)	
Total number of people affected: 31,349 people	Number of people to be assisted: 3,500 people (700 families)
Host National Society presence: The Guatemalan Red Cross has one national headquarters and 21 branches throughout the country, as well as 1,684 active volunteers (56 per cent men and 44 per cent women).	
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: National, departmental and local Disaster Reduction Coordinating Centre	

[<Click here to view the budget, here for contact details and here for the map of affected areas>](#)

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Since the beginning of September 2017, heavy rainfall has affected Guatemala; nevertheless, despite the increased precipitation, soil saturation was gradually decreasing in some parts of the country. On 28 October 2017, the situation took a turn for the worse when Tropical Storm Selma dumped 250 mm of rainfall on Guatemala, increasing soil saturation and causing landslides and flooding, which have affected the department of Alta Verapaz most severely; the accumulated rainfall in October, which peaked in the last week of October, has wreaked havoc on towns such as La Franja del Polochic, Tactic and Cobán in the department of Alta Verapaz, leaving them cut off and in dire need of humanitarian assistance.

Department	Municipality	Affected Population	Homeless	Displaced population	Shelter population	Slightly damaged homes	Moderately damaged homes
ALTA VERAPAZ	CHISEC	1,997	401	1,363		401	
ALTA VERAPAZ	COBAN	990	167	144	109	120	42
ALTA VERAPAZ	PANZOS	2,932	511	2,519	670	511	
ALTA VERAPAZ	RAXRUHA	8,418	1,814	8,367	116	1774	
ALTA VERAPAZ	SAN CRISTOBAL VERAPAZ	16	4	16	16	4	
ALTA VERAPAZ	SAN JUAN CHAMELCO	8	3	6			1
ALTA VERAPAZ	SAN PEDRO CARCHA	194	39				
ALTA VERAPAZ	SANTA CATALINA LA TINTA	65	14	65	65		

ALTA VERAPAZ	SANTA CRUZ VERAPAZ	35	7	35		1	
ALTA VERAPAZ	TACTIC	77	16	77		16	
ALTA VERAPAZ	TUCURU	23	4	23	23	3	1
	Total	14,755	2,980	12,615	999	2,830	44

Summary of affected population from October to November 2017. Source: CONRED

Continuous rains have fallen in the department of Alta Verapaz for the entire month of October 2017, affecting 62 rural and urban communities in 8 municipalities due to increased water levels and the overflow of the Cahabón, Chixoy, Icbolay and Polochic Rivers.

The heavy rains that continue to pound the area are compounded by the presence of an easterly wave, the arrival of Tropical Storm Selma, increased humidity saturation levels and swollen rivers that threaten to impact further already flooded areas. As of 31 October 2017, 13 collective centres have been opened to house more than 999 people, whose homes were directly affected.

Alta Verapaz is one of the largest maize producers in Guatemala, accounting for 10 per cent of the total production in the country; however, crops are being lost to the flooding, which puts small and medium-sized farmers' food security at risk for the next few months, according to information provided by the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) branch in Cobán. Per official reports, 450 hectares owned by 1,097 families have been affected in the municipality of Chisec, Raxruhá and Panzós.

Many affected families had taken out loans to purchase the seed and supplies that were to be used for the second agricultural cycle beginning in November 2017; nevertheless, these have now been lost, as has the hope of being able to pay off their debts, which exacerbates the extreme poverty in which affected families already live.

Moreover, the affected areas obtain their water from artisan wells, which have been contaminated by mud and human and animal excrement. Urgent actions are required to ensure the affected communities have access to safe water and can participate in hygiene promotion activities.

The entire country is experiencing soil saturation of 90 per cent or more, and while the rainfall has decreased, the probability of further hydro-meteorological events affecting the population cannot be ruled out. The map (Annex) provides details on the soil moisture conditions in Guatemala.

Summary of the current response

Guatemala is currently experiencing a situation of political instability, which has limited the government's ability to facilitate a more humanitarian actors' and the institutions that comprise the national response system's actions; however, local authorities and the local population have provided humanitarian aid using their own resources.

The flooding at the end of October/start of November 2017 compounded the heavy crop losses suffered in early October and the arrival of Tropical Storm Selma, increased humidity saturation levels and swollen rivers that threaten to impact further already flooded areas.

Overview of Host National Society

To respond to the emergency and perform its role as an auxiliary to public authorities, GRC's Cobán branch deployed ten National Intervention Team (NIT) members the weekend of 28 October 2017 to coordinate the necessary humanitarian actions to serve the affected population.

The GRC implemented actions during the weekend of 28 October that were aimed at evacuating affected families to safe places and helping with the transport of these families' household items, providing pre-hospital care to those injured and transferring patients to care centres. Moreover, GRC has also used social networks to disseminate messages and recommendations to the population on how to react to emergencies.

The GRC deployed a support team from its headquarters to the Cobán branch to carry out a needs assessment and provide support and guidance to response actions and to efforts to deliver care to affected families. Humanitarian aid consisting of water filters, long-lasting insecticide treated [mosquito] nets (LLITNs), collapsible jerrycans and cooking kits was distributed to 45 families in Chisec, Alta Verapaz; this humanitarian aid complements the food kits delivered by CONRED, which were composed of contributions from people in Alta Verapaz and other parts of the country.

The GRC coordinates all its humanitarian actions with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), which was activated by the Departmental Disaster Reduction Coordination Centre (CODRED for its acronym in Spanish).

The GRC's assessment determined that the GRC branch in Cobán suffered no damage and that no GRC volunteers have been affected by this emergency.

Lastly, the GRC has implemented a cash transfer programme (CTP) in its last three Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) operations. (One of these operations are ongoing)

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The Guatemalan Red Cross develops national-level actions as established within the National Response Plan, which also determines the operational structure, lines of action and procedures that facilitate disaster response; the National Society has 100 staff members, 21 branches and more than 1,684 volunteers nationwide.

There are Partner National Societies (PNSs) present in the country such as the Spanish Red Cross and Norwegian Red Cross, as well as IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) offices, with which the GRC president and general director maintain permanent institutional cooperation and coordination.

The IFRC provides support on Movement coordination through its Regional Disaster and Crisis Department which maintains close communication with the Guatemalan Red Cross.

A Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member is currently assisting the National Society in Guatemala with the preparation of its contingency plan and security plan within the framework of the ongoing Social Unrest DREF operation (In his final phase of implementation and final report), and separate DREF to address flooding continues to be implemented in the country's southern coastal areas (75% of the activities has been done); although both of these operations are in their final phases, possible natural phenomena and events of social unrest continue to be monitored.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The National Disaster Reduction Coordinating Centre (CONRED) is responsible for the country's national response system, establishing the structure for the national, regional, departmental, municipal and local levels, and coordinating disaster preparedness and response actions. CONRED's Operations Centre is organized into response sectors and functions, in which the Guatemalan Red Cross is part of the Inter-Institutional Liaison System and the Humanitarian Aid and Assistance Coordination Centre (CAAH).

With the activation of CODRED's Emergency Operations Centre, Alta Verapaz governmental entities are on alert, and they have activated locally established response functions and sections.

Needs analysis, targeting, scenario planning and risk assessment

Needs analysis

GRC Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis Teams, its emergency operations centre and participating delegations describe the following needs:

Shelter

Families that have been evacuated from their homes for being at risk and suffering severe damages to their homes have been housed in collective centres provided by local authorities; while these collective centres

are known to be supplying food and basic hygiene services, it is not certain if health care is also being provided.

Because the rains in the region are ongoing Cobán branch volunteers have evacuated the families along with their basic supplies to protect them; nevertheless, many affected families have already lost their personal belongings despite the GRC's efforts.

Livelihoods

According to the National Society's assessment from 26 October 2017, the flooding has damaged crops, mainly maize, affecting more than 700 families in 13 communities in Alta Verapaz; there could be an impact on the families' food and welfare, as this constitutes an essential livelihood for subsistence.

The presence of water in flooded areas, the damage to the land, the constant rains and the likelihood of further flooding is a scenario that discourages families, as they have no land available for farming, in addition to the financial loss that the damage to their crops, and in some cases to livestock, represents.

Water and Sanitation

Artisan wells in several communities were contaminated by the overflow of rivers, sewage, mud, and animal and human excrement, rendering the population's drinking water unsuitable for consumption. In some places, water services are being supported by local authorities; however, the GRC has identified 13 communities and families that lack safe water services and have not been assisted. Faced with the instability of basic water services, families seek alternatives to secure water on their own, and in many cases, they lack the basic hygiene measures to contain the risk of waterborne diseases.

Health

The health conditions in the affected region are precarious; as this is the winter season, people are exposed to gastrointestinal, dermatological, respiratory and vector-borne diseases, and the risk of disease rises as time passes, which could lead to outbreaks and consequences for children, older adults and vulnerable people. Reports from Guatemalan health authorities, which were published on 28 October 2017 in the local media, indicated that dermatological diseases with the potential of becoming an epidemic due to the existing conditions are present in the country, and the flooding could make the affected areas even more susceptible to an outbreak.

Stagnant water is an enabling environment for vectors that transmit diseases such as dengue, Zika and chikungunya, and the constant rainfall has heightened the risk of vector-borne diseases, which are already highly prevalent in this region, spreading to the flood-affected population; consequently, immediate containment actions have become a priority.

Targeting

Beneficiary selection is based on needs and the people's and their communities' capacity; the GRC is prioritizing families whose homes have been lost, destroyed by the floods or whose livelihoods have been affected or destroyed because of the emergency, followed by families whose homes have not been destroyed but whose household items, personal belongings and other family supplies were damaged by the floods.

The GRC will identify and register beneficiaries in their homes, the collective centres or the places where they sought shelter on their own based on information from community leaders on the conditions of these families.

Instruments such as the Humanitarian Charter and the Minimum Standards for Response are reference tools used to select beneficiaries to protect the people affected by the disaster's human dignity.

The beneficiary selection criteria are below:

- Families with low socioeconomic status.
- People or families considered vulnerable, including older adults, children, persons with disabilities, single mothers, people with chronic illnesses, etc.

The communities below were selected based on damage analysis and needs assessment (DANA) the National Society conducted on 27 October 2017. The National Society has already distributed non-food items (NFIs) to some of the communities, and most of the affected communities' members are either in their homes or the collective centres.

Population Targeted by the Operation

Communities	No. of families
Nuevo León	7
Tierra Blanca Río Chixoy	68
Caserío Entre Ríos	80
Yelicar 15 de Septiembre	90
Aldea Nuevo Amanecer el Plan	47
Comunidad Islas Las Tortugas	34
Aldea Tierra Blanca Sebol	74
San Jorge la Unión	68
Aldea Tierra Blanca Salinas	36
Aldea San Luis Palo Grande	82
Aldea las Brisas del Chixoy	15
Santa Marta Salinas	68
Caserío Senoja	31
	700

Scenario planning

The rainy season is not over, and the soil saturation and river levels in the area may continue to affect the population and possibly lead to an increase in the number of families that could be affected.

Scenario 1: Increased rainfall and the occurrence of a Tropical Storm / Hurricane in late November 2017 might cause greater impact in the area.

Scenario 2: The rainy season and an increase in river flows might continue to affect the same population; therefore, the implementation strategy would need to be redefined.

Scenario 3: A decrease in rainfall, allowing the population to continue with the resilience-building process.

Operation Risk Assessment

It has not been ruled out that the current rainy season might last for a few more weeks, causing other emergencies in the region and further affecting families that have already suffered the onslaught of climate-related events. Furthermore, the road infrastructure conditions in the country, especially in the affected region, make it difficult for the Guatemalan Red Cross, the population and the institutions linked to the emergency to mobilize.

B. Operational strategy

Overall Operational objective:

Implement a humanitarian aid operation aimed at addressing the urgent needs of 3,500 people (700 families) affected by the floods in the department of Alta Verapaz through livelihoods (CTP and food distribution), health and water, sanitation, hygiene promotion actions, as well as actions to reduce the prevalence of mosquito-borne diseases.

Considering the context of the intervention zone, this plan of action contemplates assisting disaster-affected families through the provision of improved food kits or its equivalent of USD 110 through a CTP which will be informed by a feasibility study based on experience with previous emergencies; the purpose of the CTP is to support the families' decisions regarding which basic needs to prioritize, as well as to provide a boost to the local economy. Linked with the distribution of 3,500 LLITNs, 1,400 units of mosquito repellent, 700 water filters and 1,400 jerrycans.

C. Detailed Operational Plan



Livelihoods and Basic Needs

People targeted: 700 families

Male: 1,715

Female: 1,785

Requirements (CHF): 81,051

Needs analysis: The flooding has damaged crops, mainly maize, affecting more than 700 families in 13 communities in Alta Verapaz. There could be an impact on the families' food and welfare, as this constitutes an essential livelihood for subsistence.

The presence of water in flooded areas, the damage to the land, the constant rains and the likelihood of further flooding is a scenario that discourages families, as they have no land available for farming, in addition to the financial loss that the damage to their crops, and in some cases to livestock, represents. Most of the affected population's household economic security could be because they are workers rather than the owners of the farms where they labour, which means that they will be without work until the floodwaters recede.

The GRC damage assessment and needs analysis teams' rapid assessment identified homes with severe and moderate damage, as well as impact to the livelihoods of the flood-affected population. Following the National Society's disaster response director's assessment, the GRC decided that the best way to support the families was through food parcels and CTP. Moreover, CONRED is supporting all the GRC's actions in the collective centres.

Families are living in collective centres and many more sought shelters on their own. Records show loss of or damage to household items, household supplies and personal belongings.

Considering the context of the intervention zone, this plan of action contemplates assisting disaster-affected families through the provision of food kits or its equivalent of USD 110 through a CTP which will be informed by a feasibility study based on experience with previous emergencies; the purpose of the CTP is to support the families' decisions regarding which basic needs to prioritize, as well as to provide a boost to the local economy.

Population to be assisted: A total of 700 families (350 families in CTP and the other 350 families through food distribution) in municipalities in Alta Verapaz affected by the floods receive support to strengthen household economic security. Since some of the families have access to the markets, CTP has been identified as the most appropriate intervention. Following the completion of the feasibility study, the National Society will determine the best approach for the CTP (Voucher, cash or card), for the families that have no access to the markets due to their communities' remoteness; these families will receive 1 food parcels for 1 month.

Programme standards/benchmarks: The GRC will use the basic food basket at the country level.

P&B Output Code	Livelihoods and Basic Needs Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas had enough resources to cover their immediate needs	% of targeted population that meet the immediate needs and food															
	Livelihoods and Basic Needs Output 1.2: Basic needs assistance for food is provided to the most affected communities	# of people reached with food assistance															
P&B Output Code	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP008	Food parcels distributions for one months																
P&B Output Code	Livelihoods and Basic Needs Output 1.5: Households are provided with unconditional cash grants to address their basic needs	# of people reached with cash for basic needs															
	P&B Output Code	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
AP081	Unconditional cash distributions																
AP081	Market assessment and feasibility study																



Health

People targeted: 700 families

Male: 1,715

Female: 1,785

Requested (CHF): 19,533

Needs analysis:

The health conditions in the affected region are precarious; as this is the winter season, people are exposed to gastrointestinal, dermatological, respiratory and vector-borne diseases, and the risk of disease rises as time passes, which could lead to outbreaks and consequences for children, older adults and vulnerable people. Reports from Guatemalan health authorities, which were published on 28 October 2017 in the local media, indicated that dermatological diseases with the potential of becoming an epidemic due to the existing conditions are present in the country.

Stagnant water is an enabling environment for vectors that transmit diseases such as dengue, Zika and chikungunya, and the constant rainfall has heightened the risk of vector-borne diseases, which are already highly prevalent in this region, spreading to the flood-affected population; consequently, immediate containment actions have become a priority.

Target Population: The GRC will provide assistance to 700 families through the health sector.

Programme Standards/reference criteria: *The HRC will use Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and World Health Organization (WHO) parameters as a reference for the health actions.*

Product Code P&B	Outcome: People reached with community-based epidemic prevention and control activities						# of people reached with community-based epidemic prevention and control activities															
	Health Output 2.4: Epidemic prevention measures carried out.						# of LLITNs distributed															
	Planned activities Week						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP021	Distribute 3,500 LLITNs (5 per family ¹) and 1,400 units of repellents (2 per family) to 700 families.																					



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

People targeted: 700 families

Male: 1,715

Female: 1,785

Requirements (CHF): 43,172

Needs analysis: The health conditions in the affected region are precarious; as this is the winter season, people are exposed to gastrointestinal, dermatological, respiratory and vector-borne diseases, and the risk of disease rises as time passes, which could lead to outbreaks and consequences for children, older adults and vulnerable people. Reports from Guatemalan health authorities, which were published on 28 October 2017 in the local media, indicated that dermatological diseases with the potential of becoming an epidemic due to the existing conditions are present in the country.

Stagnant water is an enabling environment for vectors that transmit diseases such as dengue, Zika and chikungunya, and the constant rainfall has heightened the risk of vector-borne diseases, which are already highly prevalent in this region, spreading to the flood-affected population; consequently, immediate containment actions have become a priority.

Population to be assisted: Deliver non-food humanitarian aid (WASH items) to at least 700 families, as well as educational lectures on hygiene promotion.

Programme standards/benchmarks: *The GRC will follow SPHERE Project minimum standards for this sector.*

WASH Outcome 1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water-related diseases in targeted communities	
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¹ This figure was chosen due to prevalent gender-based violence in Guatemala.

P&B Output Code	WASH Output 1.1: Continuous assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene situation is carried out in targeted communities						# of households reached with awareness raising activities on improved treatment and safe use of wastewater										
	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP026	Conduct initial assessment of the water, sanitation and hygiene situation in targeted communities																
AP026	Continuously monitor the water, sanitation and hygiene situation in targeted communities																
P&B Output Code	WASH Output 1.2: Daily access to safe water which meets Sphere and WHO standards in terms of quantity and quality is provided to target population						# of households provided with safe water services that meet agreed standards according to specific operational and programmatic context										
	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP026	Distribute 700 household water treatment products [filters], sufficient for 700 families																
AP026	Distribute 1,400 safe water storage products																
AP026	Train population of targeted communities on safe water storage and safe use of water treatment products																
P&B Output Code	WASH Outcome 2: Sustainable reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities in the recovery phase						# of households reached with key messages to promote personal and community hygiene										
	WASH Output 2.4: Hygiene promotion activities are provided to the entire affected population.						# of households reached with key messages to promote personal and community hygiene										
Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
AP030	Conduct baseline survey to define hygiene issues and assess capacity to address the problem.																
AP030	Select target groups, key messages, and methods of communicating with beneficiaries (interpersonal communication).																
AP030	Engage community on design and acceptability of water and sanitation facilities.																

Strategies for Implementation
Requirements (CHF): 19,673

Quick links

[Emergency Items Catalogue 2009](#)

[Logistics Standards Online Procurement Portal](#)

P&B Output Code	Outcome S2.1: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured																
	Output S2.1.1: Effective response preparedness and National Society surge capacity mechanism is maintained																
	Activities planned Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
AP046	Initial operational start up support implemented by IFRC for the host National Society and participating National Societies, and other services																
AP046	Monitoring visits by IFRC																
AP046	RIT deployment																

Budget

Please see [the attached budget](#).

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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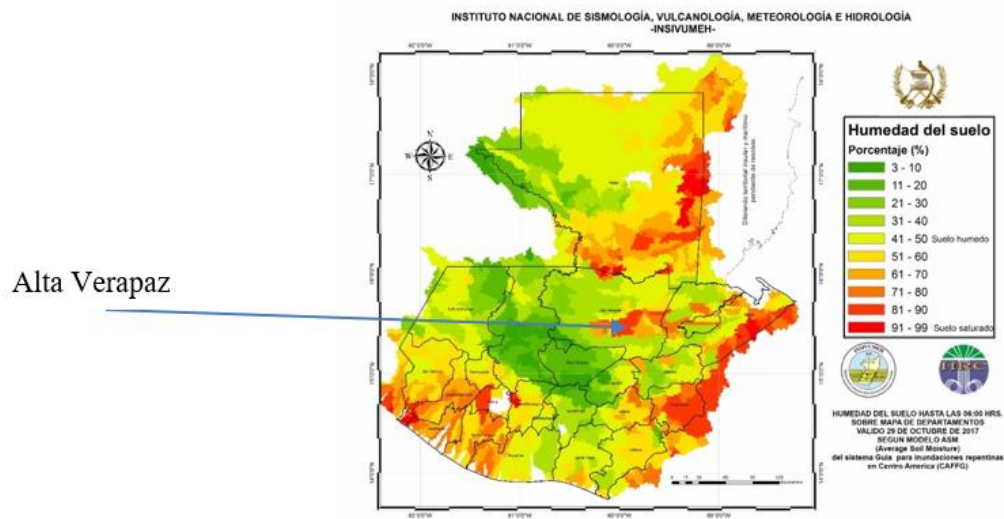
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Annex 1



Food parcel contents:

No.	Quantity	Unit	Item
1	25	Pounds	Black beans
2	20	Pounds	Rice
3	75	Pounds	Maize
4	25	Pounds	Sugar
5	15	Pounds	Fortified Cereal
6	20	Pounds	Pasta
7	1	Gallon	Oil
8	1	Pounds	Hot sauce
9	2	Pounds	Salt
11	2	Pounds	Coffee
14	1	Box	Condiments
15	1	Pack	Match
16	1	Box	Soup

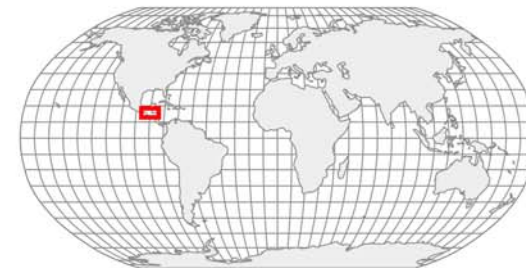
DREF OPERATION

Guatemala Floods - Alta Verapaz
MDRGT012 - PGT035

Budget Group	DREF Budget CHF
Clothing & Textiles	12,417
Food	38,477
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	28,683
Teaching Materials	2,498
Ustensils & Tools	4,197
Cash Disbursements	38,477
Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES	124,749
Total LAND, VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT	0
Dsitribution & Monitoring	2,498
Transport & Vehicle Costs	2,379
Logistics Services	10,113
Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE	14,990
International Staff	13,991
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	1,209
Volunteers	3,458
Other Staff Benefits	2,234
Total PERSONNEL	20,892
Total CONSULTANTS & PROFESSIONAL FEES	0
Total WORKSHOP & TRAINING	0
Information & Public Relations	899
Office Costs	600
Communications	999
Financial Charges	300
Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES	2,798
	0
Total TRANSFER TO PARTNERS	0
Programme and Services Support Recovery	10,623
Total INDIRECT COSTS	10,623
TOTAL BUDGET	174,052



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



Guatemala, Floods: DREF

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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. Map data sources: OCHA, ICRC, IFRC

0 60 120 180 240 km

