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# Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Panama: Floods

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**DREF operation n° MDRPA008**  
**GLIDE n° [FL-2012-000126-PAN](#)**  
**07 August 2012**

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

**104,620 Swiss francs have been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) in delivering immediate assistance to some 500 families (2,500 beneficiaries). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** During the last week of July 2012, heavy rains increased the water level of the rivers that Costa Rica shares with Panama, particularly the Sixaola River. In addition, an unusual waterspout hit the coast of Los Santos provinces, detaching roofs and uprooting trees. Overall, some 4,200 persons were affected by these phenomena.

After supporting the governmental authorities with search, rescue, evacuations and first aid care, the National Society will

now focus its efforts in providing emergency relief items, health education and hygiene promotion to 500 affected families, 428 families in Bocas del Toro province and 72 families in Los Santos province. All activities will be completed with the same families in order to provide an integrated response.

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by November 2012; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by February 2013).



**Volunteers of the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) completed assessments in Los Santos, after a waterspout, an unusual phenomenon in this part of the country, severely affected homes. Source: RCSP**

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

## The situation

During late July, severe precipitations and a waterspout associated with a cold front affected 857 families (4,298 persons) in the provinces of Bocas del Toro and Los Santos.

The three main rivers of Bocas del Toro province —the Changuinola, Teribe and Sixaola rivers— overflowed affecting communities near the border with Costa Rica. The National Civil Protection System (Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil, SINAPROC) reported on 29 July the death of one child, 32 injured persons, and 1,432 persons were taking refuge in collective centres. The rains also severely affected the banana crops, the staple element of the local economy in Bocas del Toro, as well as roads, and the electric and water services.

In Los Santos, a waterspout hit land on Mensabé port and passed through the communities of San José and El Muñoz. The strong winds of this phenomenon affected 72 families (360 persons) as more than 50 homes, two schools lost their roofs and crops were destroyed.

The following table provides information of affected families as gathered by the National Society:

Province	District	Community	Affected families	Affected persons
Bocas del Toro	Changuinola	Las Tablas	55	274
		Finca 03	124	623
		Finca 01	83	421
		Finca 02	96	478
		Finca 04	70	354
		Finca 67	26	132
		Las Delicias	35	175
		Teodroma	19	98
		La Mesa	29	147
		Sixaola/Guabito (border town)	248	1,236
Los Santos	Las Tablas	El Muñoz	38	190
		San José	34	170
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>857</b>	<b>4,298</b>

## Coordination and partnerships

In response to the emergency, the RCSP has been participating in the inter-institutional Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) to ensure an adequate exchange of information among all actors. At the moment the following governmental agencies are assisting with the response:

- National Police: supported with the evacuation of families and their transportation to designated collective centres.
- National Border Patrol: is monitoring the Sixaola River and border areas, keeping radio contact with the EOC to update information. Supporting communications with isolated areas such as Las Tablas and Las Delicias (Bocas del Toro province).
- Ministry of Public Works: supporting with the clearance of roads. Provided personal and vehicles to support the evacuations of Las Delicias.
- The National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC): provision of food and mattresses to persons sheltered in collective centres.



The Sixaola River between Costa Rica and Panama, as well as the Changuinola and Teribe rivers overflowed in late July, affecting several communities in both countries. Source: RCSP

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

As the area most affected was the Atlantic side of the border region between Panama and Costa Rica, the response to the emergency has been characterized by trans-boundary coordination between regional branches of the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) and the Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC), particularly in regards of search, rescue and evacuation of affected families, as well as first aid care. In addition, volunteers of the RCSP have completed damage and need assessments, supported local authorities with the management of collective centres, registering families and distributing humanitarian relief.

### The needs

#### Selection of people to be reached:

In coordination with local authorities, the National Society selected 500 families (2,510) to reach with the support of the DREF:

Province	Community	No. of families	No. of persons
Bocas del Toro	Las Tablas	55	274
	Finca 03	124	623
	Finca 01	83	421
	Finca 02	96	478
	Finca 04	70	354
Los Santos	El Muñoz	38	190
	San José	34	170
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>2,510</b>

The families have been selected based on the following criteria:

- Persons directly affected by the emergency and with high level of vulnerability due to low economic income.
- Families with a single women as the head of household
- Families with a person living with disability as the head of household
- Families with small children and elderly persons
- Families that lost their livelihoods
- Community in rural isolated areas where assistance is hard to reach

### The proposed operation

The RCSP Plan of Action supported by the DREF aims to assist 500 families with relief items, as well as health and hygiene promotion. Of the families to be reached, 72 will be from the Los Santos province, and 428 from the Bocas del Toro province.

Some 60 volunteers are rotating to support the current operation and the DREF will support their work with insurance and per diem. Additionally, a coordinator will be hired by the National Society to manage the operation and visibility materials will be developed.

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
<b>Outcome: The immediate needs of 500 families affected are met through the distribution of essential household items.</b>
<b>Output 1: 500 families are reached with one hygiene kit, one kitchen kit and three blankets.</b> <b>Output 2: 50 families are reached with two tarpaulins</b>
<b>Activities planned:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.</li><li>• Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.</li><li>• Distribute relief supplies to affected families.</li><li>• Monitor and report on relief distributions.</li></ul>

All items to be distributed will be dispatched from the Americas zone's Global Logistics Services warehouse and comply with the minimum standards in disaster response (SPHERE standards). The National Society will distribute kitchen kits, hygiene kits and blankets as families return to their homes, after the government provided with food and mattresses in collective centres.

The families to be reached with tarpaulins are families in the Los Santos province whose homes lost the roof as a result of the waterspout.

### Emergency health

**Outcome: The immediate risks to health and well-being are reduced through prevention and promotion actions to 500 families**

**Outputs: 500 families are reached with three mosquito nets and information on epidemic control**

**Activities planned:**

- Coordinate with existing public health services to assess and monitor the health risks
- Train volunteers using the Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV) toolkit
- Distribute 1,500 mosquito nets (3 per family)
- Develop and implement community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities

### Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

**Outcome: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases related to recent flooding has been reduced through hygiene promotion to 500 families.**

**Outputs: 500 families are reached with jerry cans and hygiene promotion campaigns.**

**Activities planned:**

- Train volunteers on PHAST methodology
- Distribute jerry cans (2 per family)
- Complete health and hygiene promotion activities in coordination with local and national authorities.
- Monitor and evaluate promotion activities

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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

- **Red Cross Society of Panama:** Jorge Alemán, risk management coordinator; phone: +507.6668.2856; email: [bolivar15@hotmail.com](mailto:bolivar15@hotmail.com)
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  - **Zone Logistics Unit (ZLU) – Americas - Global Logistics Service:** Douglas Baquero, zone logistics coordinator; phone: +507.316.1001; email: [douglas.baquero@ifrc.org](mailto:douglas.baquero@ifrc.org)
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[Click here](#)

1. DREF budget [below](#)
  2. Click [here](#) to view the map of affected areas
  3. Click [here](#) to return to the title page
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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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**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.
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**DREF OPERATION**

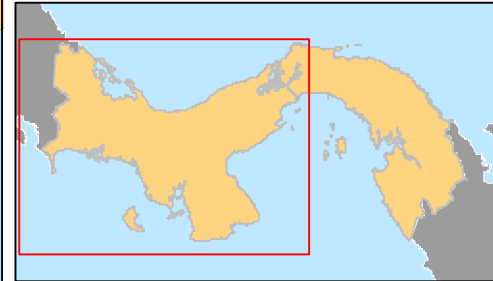
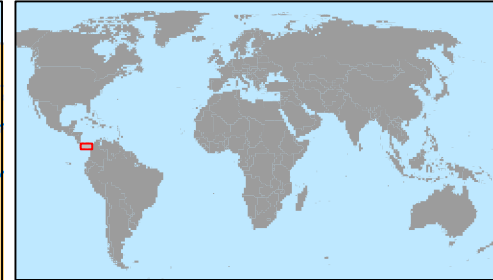
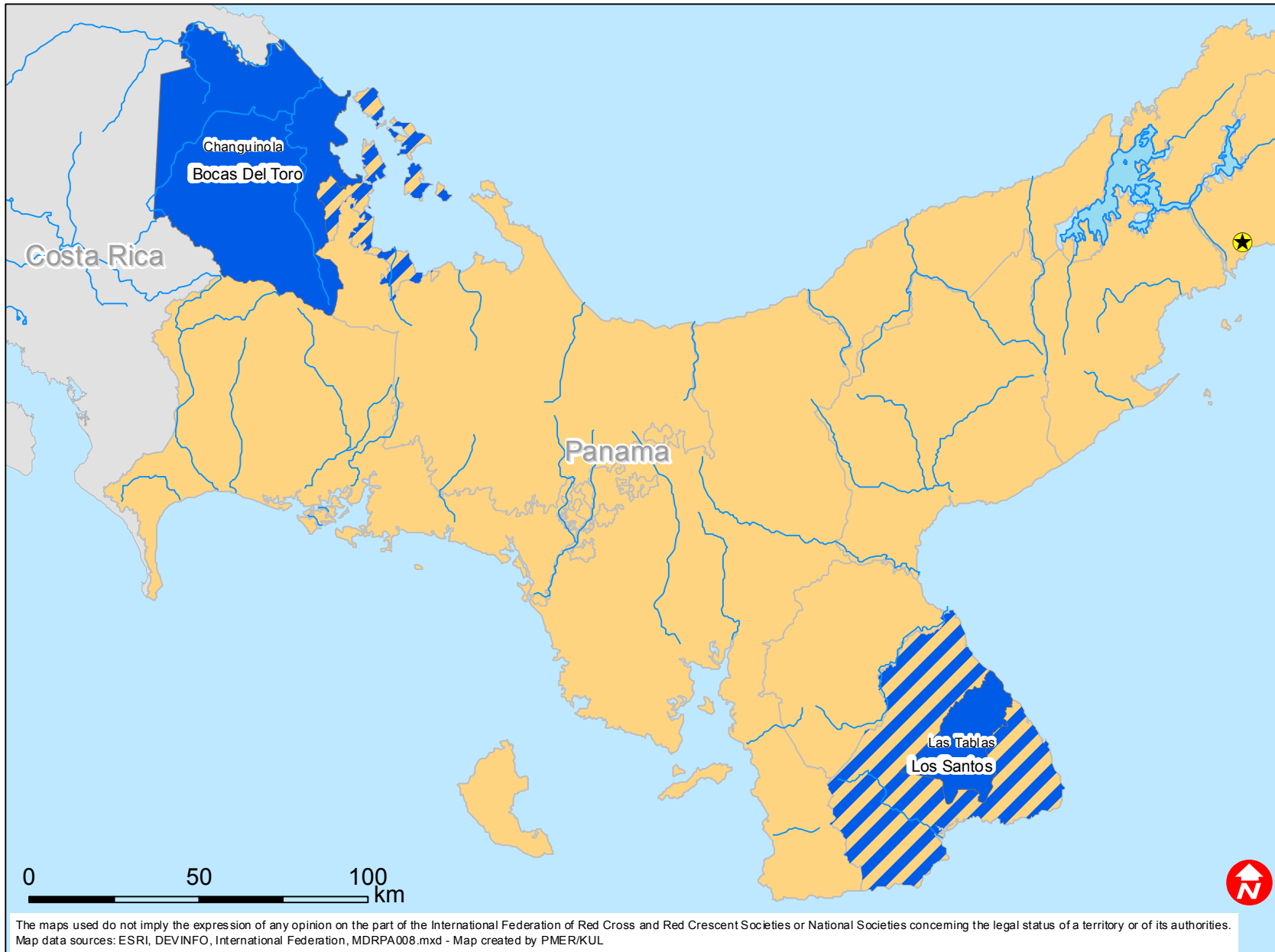
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

MDRPA008 PANAMA

Budget Group	DREF Grant Budget CHF
Shelter - Relief	1,172
Shelter - Transitional	0
Construction - Facilities	0
Construction - Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	20,502
Food	0
Seeds & Plants	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	11,227
Medical & First Aid	0
Teaching Materials	23,431
Ustensils & Tools	16,109
Other Supplies & Services	0
Regional Response Units	0
Cash Disbursements	0
<b>Total RELIEF ITEMS, CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES</b>	<b>72,441</b>
Storage, Warehousing	0
Distribution & Monitoring	4,901
Transport & Vehicle Costs	3,026
Logistics Services	2,426
<b>Total LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT AND STORAGE</b>	<b>10,353</b>
National Society Staff	4,393
Volunteers	949
<b>Total PERSONNEL</b>	<b>5,342</b>
Consultants	0
Professional Fees	0
<b>Total CONSULTANTS &amp; PROFESSIONAL FEES</b>	<b>0</b>
Workshops & Training	0
<b>Total WORKSHOP &amp; TRAINING</b>	<b>0</b>
Travel	1,953
Information & Public Relations	1,464
Office Costs	1,953
Communications	2,685
Financial Charges	2,044
Other General Expenses	0
Shared Support Services	0
<b>Total GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>10,098</b>
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	6,385
<b>Total INDIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>6,385</b>
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>104,620</b>



# Panama: Floods



-  Affected districts
-  Affected provinces