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DREF Final Report

Costa Rica: Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF Operation N°:	MDRCR019
Date of issue: 27 January 2022	Glide N°: FL-2021-000092-CRI
Operation start date: 27 July 2021	Operation end date: 31 October 2021 (3-month operation).
National Society: Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC)	Operation budget: 362,366 Swiss francs (CHF)
Total number of people affected: 200,000	Number of people assisted: 5,457
Host National Society presence: The Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) has 120 auxiliary committees (branches), 1,147 permanent staff members, and approximately 6,000 volunteers across the country in nine regional offices and three National Headquarters: Administrative, Operational and Metropolitan Centre.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Americas Regional Office (ARO) and Country Delegation for Central America.	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Care (CNE), 911 Emergency System, Firefighters Brigade, Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Transportation (MOPT), Traffic Police, National Meteorology Institute (INM), Costa Rican Energy Institute (ICE), Costa Rican Aqueduct and Sewerage Institute (AyA), Municipal Emergency Committees (CME).	
The Costa Rican Red Cross spent a total of 340,110 CHF. The remaining balance of 22,256 CHF will be returned to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund.	
<i>The major donors and partners of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, as well as DG ECHO, Blizzard Entertainment, Mondelez International Foundation, Fortive Corporation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the CRRC, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.</i>	

A. Situation analysis

Description of the disaster

Heavy rains that fell in the Costa Rican Caribbean starting 22 July 2021 caused severe flooding in several areas of the country, mainly in northern and Caribbean regions and in the province of Cartago.

On 22 July 2021, the National Meteorology Institute (INM) reported rains of varying intensity throughout the day over northern and Caribbean regions, increasing in intensity overnight. This activity reached the north and eastern areas of the Valle Central region. Winds of up to 70 km/h were reported in the Pacifico Norte region and slightly weaker winds in Valle Central.



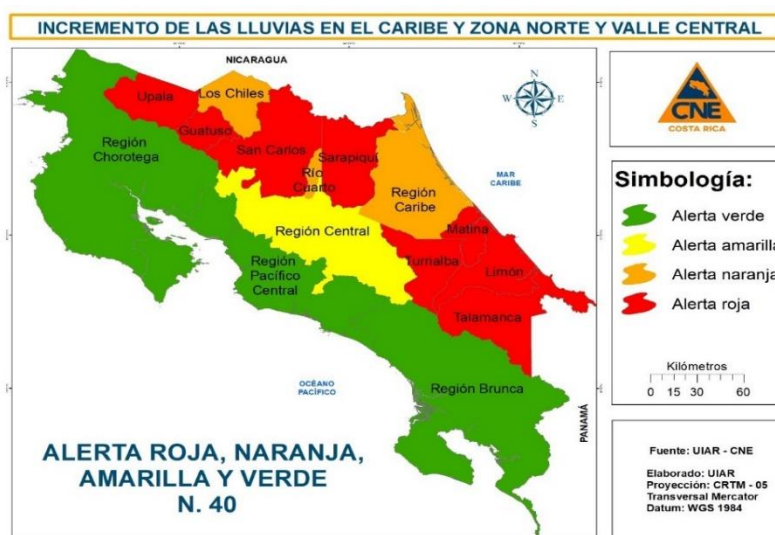
Families being rescued in Pensurth.
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross.

On 23 July 2021, the National Risk Prevention and Emergency Care Commission (CNE) raised the alert status to Red for the cantons of Turrialba, Matina, Limón, Talamanca and Sarapiquí. An Orange Alert remained in place in northern areas and the rest of the Caribbean region, while Valle Central remained under a Yellow alert and Vertiente del Pacífico under a Green Alert. The greatest impact from floods and/or landslides was seen in the cantons of Talamanca, Limón, Siquirres, Guácimo, Pococí and Matina in Limón; Turrialba, Paraíso, Cartago, Oreamuno, Jiménez, Alvarado, and La Unión in Cartago; San José, Alajuelita, Puriscal, Santa Ana and Moravia in San José; Corredores, Quepos and Golfito in Puntarenas; Sarapiquí, Heredia and San Isidro in Heredia; and San Carlos, San Ramón and Guatos in the province of Alajuela.

Families were forced to move in with relatives or to temporary collective centres.

Municipal Emergency Committees (CMEs) reported 2,771 events in 36 cantons – 1,994 related to flooding and 380 related to landslides. In addition, seven highways were damaged: Route 32; Route 10 Paraíso-Siquirres; Route 415 Turrialba; Route 230 Pacayas-Turrialba; Route 224 Ujarrás in Paraíso; the 225 along some points of Cachí-La Suiza; and Route 36 in Bribri.

By 25 July 2021, 29 affected municipalities had been reported, as well as 36 collective centres currently open (to assist 1,885 people), 64 sheltered families, 381 sheltered individuals, and 200,000 people exposed to flooding, as follows:



LIMÓN	CARTAGO	SAN JOSÉ	PUNTARENAS	HEREDIA	ALAJUELA	GUANCASTE
Talamanca	Turrialba	San José	Corredores	Sarapiquí	San Carlos	Tilarán
Limón	Paraíso	Puriscal	Quepos	Heredia	Los Chiles	
Siquirres	Cartago	Alajuelita	Golfito	San Isidro	San Ramón	
Guácimo	Oreamuno	Santa Ana		San Rafael	Guatuso	
Pococí	Jiménez	Moravia			Palmares	
Matina	Alvarado	Montes de Oca			Sarchí	
	La Unión	Desamparados			Upala	
		Vázquez de Coronado				

Cantons reporting flooded areas. Source: National Emergency Commission

Once the main impact caused by the increased rainfall had passed, food equivalent to one basic basket was delivered daily, as people did not have sufficient income to supplement the basic basket with items such as meat products, cleaning materials, etc.

As the rains decreased and river levels fell, many affected families returned to their homes. They managed to get to their communities little by little despite the state of the badly damaged roads.

Summary of the response

Overview of Host National Society Response Action.

Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) prepared and responded to the floods resulting from the increased rainfall in Zona Norte, the Caribbean region, and Valle Central, deploying its capacity, coordinating with humanitarian organizations, and carrying out the following actions:

- Ongoing coordination with Costa Rican national authorities through the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and the CNE Board of Directors.
- Actions focused on the preventive evacuation of residents, search and rescue, and outpatient care.
- Participation and coordination of actions by institutional representatives with authorities and civil society representatives, as members of CMEs.
- Establishment of a Level 5 Response as of 23 July 2021, activation of the Situation Room to capture and assess information, and activation of CCAs at the regional level.
- Deployment of resources from different regions across the country to support the most affected areas, as summarized below (information gathered from 25 July 2021).

CRRC issued internal Alert Levels, deployed staff, and mobilized resources to respond to events in the country. It activated a Situation Room and the CECOPE and maintained a presence within the National EOC and the CMOs.



Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Actions in the country.

The International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) remained in contact with Costa Rican Red Cross since the rains' onset through its Central America Cluster Delegation and the Disaster and Climate Crisis (DCC) team. It issued informational bulletins to all IFRC staff to keep everyone apprised of the situation and prepare actions to support the National Society.

Overview of non-RCRC actors' actions in the country.

The CNE established response and coordination actions by the various first-response institutions, as described below:

The CNE activated the Regional and Municipal Emergency Committees, which, with support from Community Committees, moved people to safe locations, rehabilitated roads, responded to incidents reported via the 911 emergency system, and arranged for logistics to provide comprehensive assistance to people housed in temporary collective centres.

- The CNE requested Emergency Committees and institutions to:
 - Monitor weather conditions at the local level and remain alert to weather conditions via INM regular reports.
 - Remain on active status and monitor the most at-risk sectors in the cantons.
 - Maintain ongoing communications with Community Emergency Committees.
 - Check inventory of resources available to assist the affected population.
- The CNE and Municipal Emergency Committees set up nine temporary collective shelters in six cantons to house approximately 328 vulnerable people. All implemented the necessary COVID-19-related safety measures to prevent infection

Actions such as the declaration of alerts across the country, personnel deployments to various points for inter-institutional coordination, response to events in the country, and the activation and operational monitoring of the EOC are all coordinated through the CNE.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

Needs analysis

The operation had the support from the regional operation coordinators and administrators from the beginning.

There were several visits done to the directly affected regions that allowed the National Society to determine the priorities to be addressed and the approach. This process used information provided by staff, volunteers, and regional operation coordinators based on field assessments carried out by the National Intervention Teams (NIT).

Health

Health services were affected in various ways, including flooded premises and water and power supply problems. Considering that this adds to the impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, measures have been strengthened in health centres. The CNE has set up differentiated collective centres for people with COVID-19, and strict controls are maintained in other collective centres to prevent large outbreaks. Therefore, personal protective equipment for first responders and affected families was one of the greatest needs.

The Costa Rican Social Security System is the entity operationally responsible for providing emergency care, including coordination of psychosocial support. It is responsible for the hospital system at all levels during this emergency, including health management. It has maintained health support and constantly monitored every facility and all the various services it provides, including the impact that its staff may suffer on a personal level that may pose a risk to the hospital system and the affected population in any way. The Costa Rican Ministry of Health oversees and monitors all actions related to health on an ongoing basis to prevent the emergence of diseases or an increase in communicable diseases. To date, government institutions have addressed the needs during the emergency and provided first aid, primary health, mental health, and psychosocial support services to the affected population.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene

Damage to drinking water systems was reported (18 systems damaged), including water intake, storage systems, and distribution lines caused by landslides. Artisanal wells are the primary water source for a significant number of flood-affected communities.

The Aqueducts and Sewers company gradually restored drinking water services, while ASADAS kept track of the systems that were still in the process of being recovered. Therefore, the intervention strategy included a water and sanitation programme for affected communities.

Livelihoods and food security

The rivers' rapid rise damaged families' productive assets and belongings. Recovery has been difficult because families' physical, financial, and natural resources were seriously affected, which means that households' financial and food security was seriously compromised. Some families and small-scale farmers and shop owners are still trying to recover. Activities may include migrants living in coastal and border areas.

Cash and Vouchers Assistance (CVA) was considered to help meet basic needs and provide affected families with adequate access to food. This is done to prevent affected populations from resorting to negative coping mechanisms and adverse effects on local markets. Cash can prevent negative impacts on local businesses and have a multiplier effect to reactivate the local economy by contributing to the rapid recovery of local markets.

B. Operational strategy

To ensure humanitarian assistance for at least 1,500 families (7,500 people) affected by floods and landslides (complementing ongoing actions by the State) through a Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) programme aimed at restoring livelihoods in parallel to delivering water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services, such as distributing filters and water storage containers, and hygiene promotion campaigns.

Human Resources

To implement this Plan of Action, Costa Rican Red Cross had a multidisciplinary technical team to ensure the implementation of activities:

- One field coordinator
- One water and sanitation technician for hygiene promotion (charged to the operation)
- One Livelihoods technician to implement the Cash and Voucher Assistance (charged to the operation)
- Administrative - accounting personnel in Administrative Headquarters.
- Personnel from the Risk Management and Disaster Response Directorate (DINAGER) and respective departments.
- Procurement department personnel (purchasing, warehousing, fleet).
- Press department staff.
- IT department staff.
- Volunteer staff from affected regions.

Process oversight falls to the Risk Management Directorate (with support from General Management) and the institutional administrative structure in all its departments. Headquarters also has a monitoring team tasked with tracking financial reports and ensuring the quality of the intermediate results and final reports submitted.

The operation procured materials both nationally and internationally, as local markets did not carry the products required for the operation.

- CRRC has a procurement department through which all supplies and equipment required by committees at the national level are purchased and a central warehouse. Purchasing procedures are endorsed by the government, as many processes use funds allocated by the State.
- The Global Logistics Unit will support the National Society and assist with quality control of the purchases made according to the authorization levels required in purchasing procedures.

IFRC's Logistics Unit in Panama assisted in acquiring 1,500 water filters and 1,500 jerrycans for the affected population.

Communications

CRRC has an institutional Communications Department that maintains lines and strategies, both inside and outside the organization, to ensure visibility as well as appropriate support to institutional activities during emergency response and recovery phases.

Communications objectives based on target audience:

1. External Communications. A series of informational outputs were implemented to maintain a line of transparent and objective information on what the Red Cross was doing to assist those affected by emergencies, aimed at the general population and especially beneficiaries, for example, via social networks, interviews, bulletins.

2. Documentation. Information was provided by the National Emergency Commission and drawn from field assessment reports submitted by the by National Society regional operation coordination. This includes photographs that show the processes in different communities.

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)

CEA is a key cross-cutting component of IFRC response across all operations and programmes that focuses on supporting interventions in DREF areas of concern. During an emergency, bringing information channels to affected populations through channels the community trusts is a priority.

The messages disseminated during the operation allowed affected people to have information on what to do, where to go, and how to protect themselves from COVID-19 and other flood-related diseases (diarrhea, dengue, chikungunya, Zika, among others). The ongoing pandemic required delivering messages regarding the protection and ensuring mechanisms to monitor rumours and misinformation.

Reliable feedback channels were established to ensure community engagement, transparency of operations, and accountability to the community. The operation ensured that these mechanisms were in place and that the feedback collected was used to improve the operation and respond to the needs expressed by the community. Feedback mechanisms were also essential for the early identification of protection needs, coordinating with PGI teams to ensure these needs were addressed.

Information technology (IT)

During the entire operation, information was gathered using the ODK data management tool, providing a database with the information necessary for the process.

Security

The National Society has a Security Office responsible for analysing risks and generating guidelines. These guidelines are always followed during operations, and potential scenarios are analysed to minimize risks.

Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER)

The CRRC had a monitoring team of personnel from the Risk Management Department. This operation submitted an intermediate progress report and one final report at the end of the operation.

Administration and Finance

The Financial-Accounting Department has trained personnel available to support the work areas included in the Plan of Action.

The Financial-Accounting Department's strategy focused on:

- Having department personnel available to work on specific aspects of the operation.
- Complying with the issuance of reports, constant monitoring of compliance and correct use of budget items.
- Informing the various work area coordinators about optimization and proper use of resources allocated to the Plan of Action

C. Detailed operational plan



Livelihoods and basic needs

People reached: 3,746

Male: 1,900

Female: 1,846

Livelihoods and basic needs: Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of targeted households with sufficient income to meet their survival threshold	800	875

Livelihoods and basic needs: Output 1.2: Basic needs assistance for livelihoods security including food is provided to the most affected communities

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with food assistance or cash for basic needs	4,000	3,746
Total amount of cash transferred to beneficiaries vs. amount planned	CHF 220,000	CHF 220,076
# of staff/volunteers trained to provide clear information to communities during assessments.	50	76

Narrative description of achievements

Beneficiary selection

This activity included several visits to directly affected regions and communities that allowed the National Society to determine the priorities to be addressed. This process used information provided by staff, volunteers, and regional operation coordinators based on field assessments carried out by the National Intervention Teams (NIT) with support from different community leaders.

Four-wheel drive vehicles were used to access communities. The Coast Guard, boat owners, and other vehicles were also used where no National Society vehicles were available.

The rains affected families in these areas because of houses' proximity to the river, which flooded their homes and washed away their food, clothing, appliances, crops, and livestock. Other families lost their crops, but their homes made it through relatively unscathed.

Most of these families' incomes come from their crops or occasional jobs in other properties and have been affected.



Beneficiary selection process Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



Access to communities Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

The communities and regions assisted were:

Region	Province	Canton	Community	Beneficiaries
Region 3	Cartago	Turrialba	Turrialba Centro	40
Total				40

Region	Province	Canton	Community	Beneficiaries
Region 9	Zona Norte	Guatuso	Barrio Cuna del Cacao	22
			Barrio El Carmen	23
			Barrio Imas	72
			Barrio La Liga	3
			Barrio Nazareth	19
			Barrio Santa Marta	53
			Betania	1
			San Andrés - Redondel	25
Total				218

Region	Province	Canton	Community	Beneficiaries
Region 4	Heredia	Sarapiquí	San Antonio	38
			Puerto Viejo	5
			Pital	1
			Media Vuelta	24
			Mazaya	20
			Isla Calero	3
			Fátima	47
			El Barbudo	26
			Delta Costa Rica	20
			Delta Colorado	26
			Cureñita	29
			Cureña	22
			Caño San Luis	15
			Caño San José	44
			Boca Tapada	1
Boca San Carlos	19			

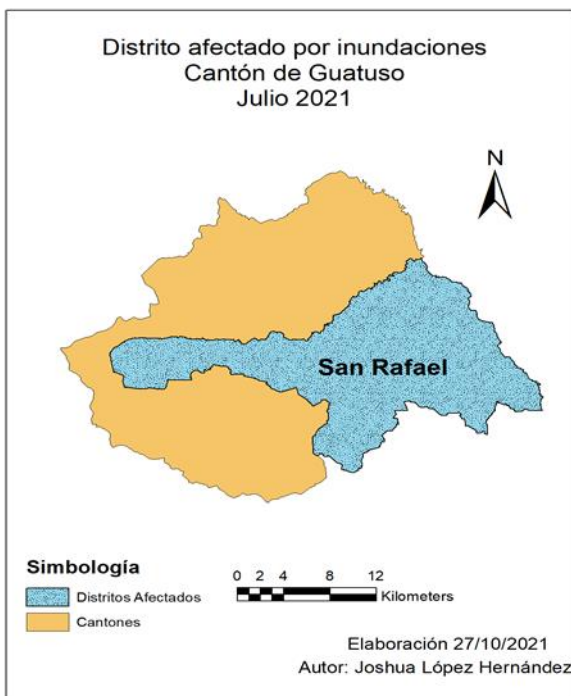
		Boca la Ceiba	20
		Boca Río San Carlos	4
		Boca Las Marías	10
Total			374

Region	Province	Canton	Community	Beneficiaries		
Region 7	Limón	Talamanca	Amubri	33		
			La Bribri	11		
			Las Vegas - Las Palmas	29		
			Pueblo Civil	26		
			Celia	1		
			Gandoca, Bonifé	16		
		Matina	Mawamba	44		
			Barra Pacuare	52		
			Bataan	1		
			B-Line	30		
		Total				243

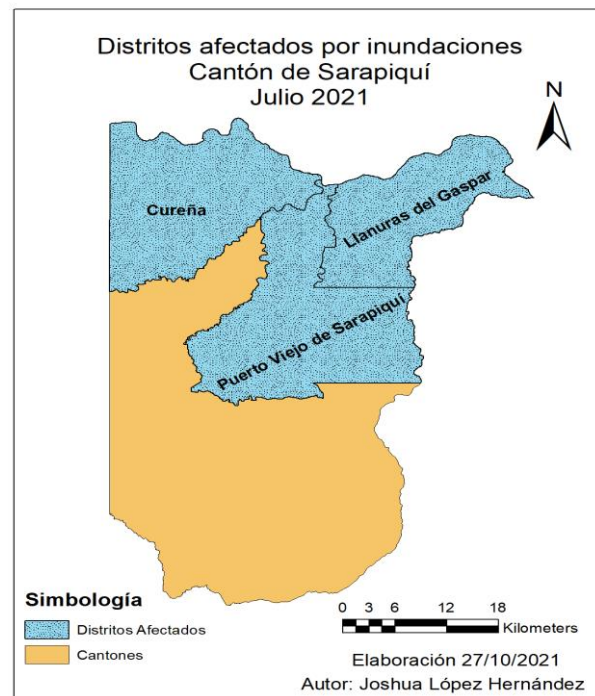
Beneficiaries were selected using ODK, including various criteria. Using technological tools allowed generating a database of all the information collected in each affected community, which enabled the National Society to know the number of beneficiaries in each community.

Cash and voucher assistance (CVA) distribution

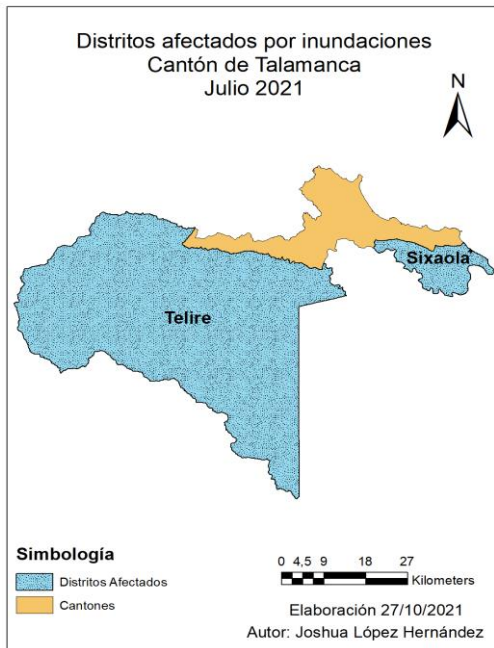
After the forms were filled and the beneficiaries were analysed and selected, the NS proceeded to arrange for the delivery of the cash assistance cards, as reflected in the following maps:



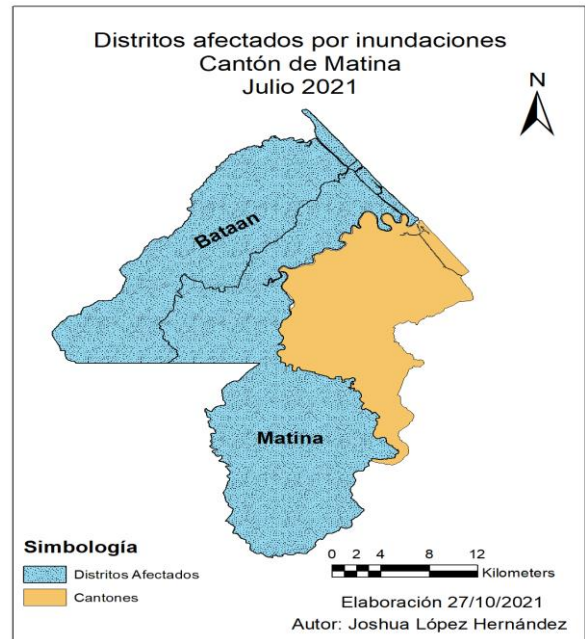
*Region 9, Northern Zone
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*



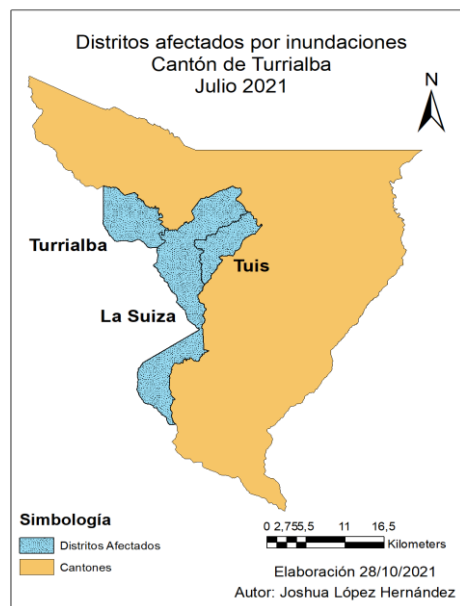
*Region 3, Heredia, Puerto Viejo Sarapiquí
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*



Region 7, Limón
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



Region 7, Limón
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



Region 7, Limón
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

Once the locations were determined, beneficiaries were contacted to inform them of the type of aid they would be receiving and the date, place, and time. Because of the different scams in the country, they were given key information to prove that this was not a scam and to encourage them to show up when called. The regions and auxiliary committees were provided information regarding the project beforehand to clarify any doubts if necessary. As part of the humanitarian aid card delivery and beneficiary verification, each of the 875 beneficiaries was assigned a code linked to their data that they had to provide to CRRC to claim the cash assistance card.

When the second disbursement of funds arrived, the National Society realized that they could support 75 additional families. It assessed other affected communities within the targeted areas and selected the additional 75 households to be benefitted. When the selection process had concluded, and the 875 families had been selected, the National Society realized that the number of individuals it had used as a point of reference did not meet the target set in the indicator, as said indicator was calculated based on families consisting of five members, but many had fewer members.

Before the humanitarian aid card was delivered, beneficiaries were given a talk to again explain what the project consisted of, where the funds came from, how and what the card could be used for, the amount that would be received, the places and ATMs where they could use the card, the card's activation, and deactivation times, and to provide security recommendations.



*Informational talk to beneficiaries in Guatuso.
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*



*Informational talk to beneficiaries in Turrialba.
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*

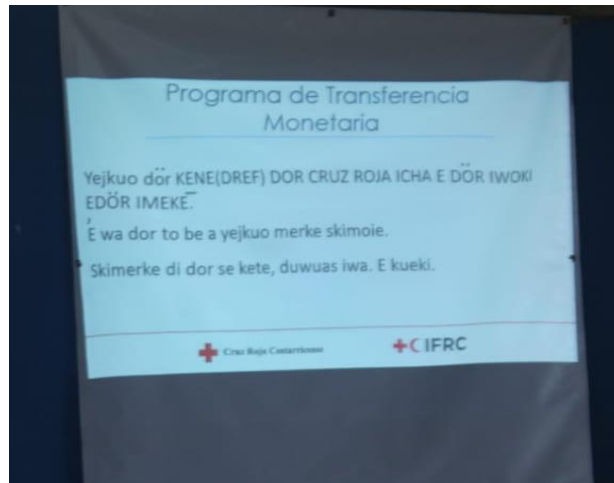


Informational talk to beneficiaries in Amubri, an indigenous community. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



*Humanitarian aid delivery in Amubri.
Source: Costa Rican Red Cross*

The cards were delivered with support from the community and the NS to have people translate the information to Bribri, the dialect spoken by the indigenous community in Costa Rica. This helped to engage with beneficiaries, as many do not speak Spanish well or are not able to read it. They were very grateful that this fact was considered and that the talk was delivered in their language.



Informational talk to beneficiaries in Amubri, an indigenous community. Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

The entire selection, delivery, and monitoring process concluded on 31 October, distributing aid to 875 families (3,746 individuals - 49 percent male and 51 percent female) in 36 communities in five cantons within the four targeted regions.

Two phone lines and an email were made available for people who wished to contact the project's coordinator and technicians directly to address any doubts or queries, file complaints, make suggestions or raise any issues regarding the field's work visits. These phone lines, which were handled Monday to Saturday from 07:00 to 18:00, remained active until the operation's end.

The total amount of cash transferred to beneficiaries vs. amount planned

The NS identified a financial service provider to implement the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) that reduced implementation costs. The chosen provider was Banco Nacional de Costa Rica, with which the NS conducts a large part of its banking operations. The decision to work with this Financial Service Provider was taken after careful evaluation and consideration of available options and coordination with the IFRC regional office (CVA and Procurement) based on the benefits offered by the service provider.

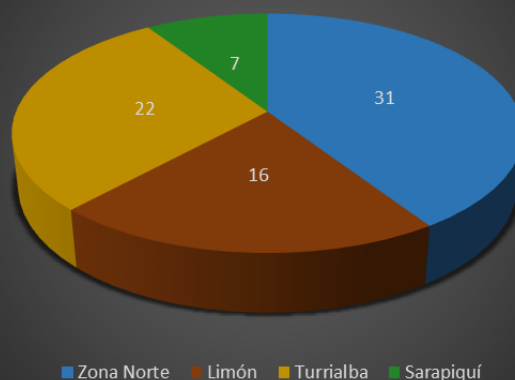
After an analysis, it was decided that the amount to be transferred should be adjusted to an amount that ATMs could dispense, avoiding unused balances on the cards. Thanks to this adjustment and a favourable exchange rate for the second CVA disbursement, the NS increased the number of assisted families to 875 (75 additional families).

The final amount in local currency assigned directly to the families was an equivalent of 246 USD. The fixed amount was calculated based on the information from the market assessment, which considers insights mainly from the basic food basket and other elements from health, hygiene, and education. On top of this amount, there was some financial cost related to the disbursements of each transfer. The amount assigned to the families was supposed to cover basic food, education, health, and hygiene needs.

Number of staff/volunteers trained to provide clear information to communities during assessments

The NS trained a total of 76 volunteers from different regions to enable them to provide clear and adequate information and clear doubts of the different communities when filling out the forms.

Voluntarios Capacitados por Región



After the distribution, the beneficiaries were followed up through calls, where they were asked if they had been presented with any problem when withdrawing the funds and in which they had been able to make use of the aid. The vast majority told us that they used it to buy food, others for medicines, or purchase materials to repair their homes.

Challenges

Initial data and forecasts predicted a high number of affected communities; however, upon assessment, it was found that, unlike other emergencies, these were remote and scarcely populated, which meant greater logistics and time to reach them.

The card acquisition process. The process required inviting various banking entities to participate in the bidding process; therefore, the process to purchase the cards began on 28 July, the contract was awarded on 10 September (to Banco Nacional de Costa Rica), and the cards were received on 29 September, which allowed the NS to begin delivery to the beneficiaries.

In some communities, residents were afraid to provide their information because they were undocumented. They were informed of what the project aimed to achieve, always respecting them, and gaining their trust to provide the information.

One of the biggest challenges was working in an indigenous community because of the language barrier. Since many did not understand the language, they did not know the project despite losing their crops and homes to the floods. Volunteers from the area facilitated engagement with every family in the community.

The access to some communities, since many required doing so via the river, which required asking the Coast Guard or boat owners in the area for assistance.

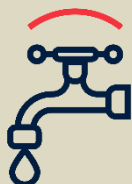
The financial service provider selection process for the CVA. Despite the small amount, it was decided to follow recommendations and submit them to the IFRC for review so that the process could be used in this and in future operations. Review and approval by the IFRC led to a one-month delay in selecting the provider and starting distributions.

Issues with the provider's card platform. Despite having the funds, many beneficiaries could not withdraw the funds due to blocks in the provider's systems. Thanks to the two available phone lines, the NS became aware of this, which immediately reported the issue to the provider and updated the beneficiaries. The problem was solved quickly.

Lessons learned

A meeting was held with the staff who had assisted throughout this process, collecting the following information.

- The importance of each process was made known, from project start-up to project close out where the results are seen, which are very valuable.
- Experience and learning from the work process and tools.
- Satisfaction when becoming aware of the results of an effort they made at the beginning of the project and seeing that it was true.
- Satisfaction when learning about the different situations that the beneficiaries are going through and hearing their words of gratitude.
- Motivation to keep going and continue working with the communities.



Water, sanitation, and hygiene

People reached: 5,457

Male: 2,763

Female: 2,694

WASH Outcome 1: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people with improved access to drinking water.	7,500	5,457

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

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of households who receive a water filter and a water storage device	1,500	1,499

WASH Output 2.4: Hygiene promotion activities are provided to the entire affected population

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with hygiene promotion activities	1,500 / 1 per family	1,499
# of volunteers involved in hygiene promotion activities	50	50

Narrative description of achievements

Procurement of the filters

The main action was planning to re-export 1,500 filters and 1,500 collapsible jerrycans by the IFRC from Panama to Costa Rica. The items were received and stored in DINAGER's warehouses while planning the other phases began.



(Above) Filters are received and unloaded in Costa Rica / DINAGER – Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

Beneficiary selection

This stage involved deploying staff and volunteers throughout the flood-affected areas, requiring joint planning by the project unit and committees to ensure sufficient resources for this task.

Technological tools such as cell phones and the ODK app were used to select the beneficiaries. This app allows filling out any questionnaire and storing the answers in the cloud. This ensures safe, accurate and more efficient information handling, not to mention optimal time management to complete each survey.

The plan was implemented in the same way in each community, doing sweeps in affected areas and administering the survey to every family to assess whether they needed this resource.



Beneficiary selection in Turrialba – Limón – Zona Norte; Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

Distribution of the filters

Logistics were necessary at this stage, transporting supplies and moving to different work areas as required. 1,499 households (5,457 people) received water filters and jerrycans. In addition to the filters, people received an informational talk on their proper use and water treatment to prevent disease. These talks were delivered by project team members, who complemented the information with brochures.



Talk to beneficiaries in Turrialba – Limón – Zona Norte; Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

Challenges

Access to some communities required transportation via the river, which required asking the Coast Guard or boat owners in the area for assistance and additional support.

Due to the situation, community members did not come to the location indicated by the community leader, while other families had left the area. When delivering the filters and jerrycans, some families initially selected moved between communities, but this issue was detected when the families' location was followed up.

It was not possible to reach the initial target of the 7,500 people to get access to water because the estimated amount was calculated based on the assumption to find an average of 5 people per family. However, there were a significant number of families whose average per family member was lower than was initially estimated.

Lessons learned

- Good coordination by the project unit with the communities
- Good explanation on use and promotion of hygiene to the community
- Good information and attention by the project unit
- New experience and learning
- Excellent teamwork and good initiative for work



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People reached:90

Male:45

Female: 45

PGI Outcome 1: Communities become more peaceful, safe and inclusive through meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
One PGI plan implemented during the three-month DREF operation	1	1

PGI Output 1.1: Programmes and operations ensure safe and equitable provision of basic services, considering different needs based on gender and other diversity factors

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained in PGI	50	120

Narrative description of achievements

The spaces were created thanks to joint work by the Risk Management and Emergency Response National Directorate's Project Unit and the CRRC National Youth Directorate's National Coordination for Social Dynamization. The latter proposed an initiative called "Regional Leadership Meetings" that made it possible to integrate tools that addressed the PGI theme so that both volunteers and staff could explore, learn about, and reflect on the manifestation of PGI-related issues in everyday life and achieve ownership of the knowledge that makes it possible for them to improve their tasks within the National Society.

Combining efforts with the National Youth Directorate allowed using the meetings they already had planned to reach a greater number of staff.

The structure of the meetings was proposed from a play-training methodology where participants can reflect on the subject through their experience during participation. It was also aimed at creating a space to reflect on how much knowledge, ideas, thoughts, or taboos they have regarding the topics addressed by and for the National Society regions.

These meetings were conducted as a get together regulated by a series of steps proposed in the security protocol created for this activity, considering:

1. Developing a FORMS for participants to monitor people with COVID
2. Locating these people via the phone to confirm their answers on the subject.
3. Cleansing the lists.
4. Ensuring constant cleaning, handwashing, and disinfection before, during and after each intervention.
5. Ensuring at least two mask changes during the activity.
6. Ensuring resources for cleaning through coordination with activity administrators and collaborators.

The goal was to create a safe and trusting environment in which all attendees could participate actively, consciously, and honestly in the configuration proposed for each region. This configuration was created

during a meeting with each region's representatives, who chose which of the issues raised within the project they believed required addressing. Therefore, each intervention was unique to a region and addressed issues specific to said region.

After each dynamic was completed, a space was provided to make comments and provide feedback covering personal and collective areas, to ultimately integrate all comments into the work conducted within the National Society from the various areas.

Thus, future projects will be expected to contemplate themes, concepts, among other things, and thus be able to create activities that truly have an impact, among these PGI.

The "Regional Leadership Meetings" were created jointly by the technical team in charge of the spaces and the regional youth headquarters, which, through virtual meetings, spoke of regional needs related to the various topics addressed during interventions.

The meetings' output was to be a "regional customized configuration" that addressed needs through various educational and recreational tools. Below is a configuration created for the Cartago region, one of the regions targeted by the project.

Regional Meeting Cartago 10/10/21
Place: Oukumene
Topics: Teamwork - Leadership - Motivation

Time	Activity
10:00 - 12:00	Commencement of activity Rules and protocols to be followed during the activity 1 st work block with topics mentioned above. Teamwork
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch
12:50 - 2:00	2 nd work block with topics mentioned above. Leadership
2:00 - 3:00	3 rd work block Motivation General reflection and closing
°3:00 - 4:00	Clean up of venue by DINAJU and regional offices.

°Note: At least one hour will be necessary to clean and disinfect the venue after the event.

Icebreaker: Circle of Superpowers / Expectations

Block 1: Teamwork
 Who wants to sign up!
 The gear
 A cooking pots

Block 2: Leadership

- The glass
- At the rhythm of intercultural connections
 - The captive ball

Block 3: **Motivation**

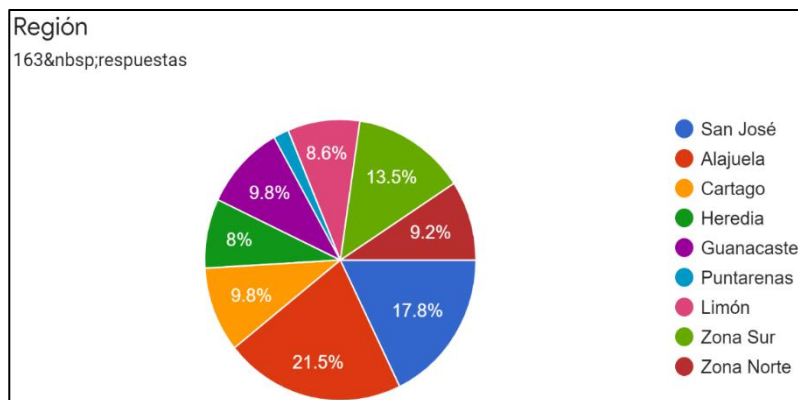
- The power of words.
- The candidacy.
 - Minefield.
 - Two boxes.

No. of participating staff	
Province	No. of staff
San José	29
Cartago	18
Heredia	27
Zona Norte	13
Total	87

This is a list of the activities carried out during this process. Each has a step-by-step guide on how to execute them, the materials needed, etc. Many of these were taken from an IFRC programme called YABC and applied by a certified facilitator. This provided a space for many reflections on the various topics to be addressed, thus having a positive impact on participants. It should be noted that these interventions were carried out internally within the National Society to enable participants in regional meetings to conduct similar events

with members of their own communities.

Graph 1



The graph shows the percentage of participants, by region, while the table below shows the number of people who participated by region. These data were taken from the activities' attendance lists. Furthermore, the objective of conducting a virtual talk on the theme of PGI was fulfilled, which was attended by 11 individuals including administrators, office heads, staff, and volunteers.



Intervention in Cartago
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



Intervention in Heredia.
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



Intervention in Limon
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross



Intervention in Zona Norte.
 Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

Challenges

The fear that the spaces would not meet the objective, i.e., to create spaces for reflection on the topics discussed. However, this was not the case and the spaces exceeded expectations.

The fear that coordination could not be achieved on time because of financial and health issues in the country since the pandemic began. Fortunately, these were managed in the best way by regional headquarters, boards of directors and administration in targeted areas.

The time factor, as the project implementation timeframe did not coincide with the regional meetings' initial agenda; however, thanks to proper planning, this ended up just representing a learning opportunity for future similar projects.

Working integrally with other structures within the National Society. As in other National Societies, there are expert areas designed to implement specific topics; however, due to internal communication issues between units and other very diverse factors (such as the pandemic in this case), collective work did not happen in the best way.

For this occasion, several spaces were created that enabled adequate communication, thus allowing the possibility of working together, covering the various areas, and thus fulfilling the desired project objectives -

undoubtedly, a space for learning and reinforcement in tasks that will contribute positively at this time and in future projects.

Lessons learned

- Planning to ensure a good time and resource management
- Adequate logistics in advance related to participants and individuals in charge of people.
- Establish tools to observe participants.
- Improve feedback time for participants and those in charge.
- Greater emphasis on successes and mistakes during the activity and how these can be related to daily life.

In addition to the entire process, it is necessary to note the pleasant time and space of controlled coexistence after so much downtime because of the pandemic. These interventions motivated National Society staff and gave new significance to and enhanced our actions as agents of community and national change during emergencies.

PGI is very important, so we feel committed to giving continuity to the spectrum of this theme and its cross-cutting application before, during and after an emergency. The main focus was increasing awareness on PGI related topics among the staff and volunteers and the PGI tools and guidelines to be implemented accordingly at the community level.

National Society strengthening

S1.1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform

Indicators:	Target	Actual
NS has the necessary resources to implement the operation during the 3 months of the operation	Yes	Yes
Output S1.1.3: National Society compliance with Principles and Rules for Humanitarian Assistance is improved		
# of people hired to implement the EPoA	2	2
# of feedback methods that meet humanitarian assistance principles and rules	1	1

International Disaster Response

Outcome S2.1: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured

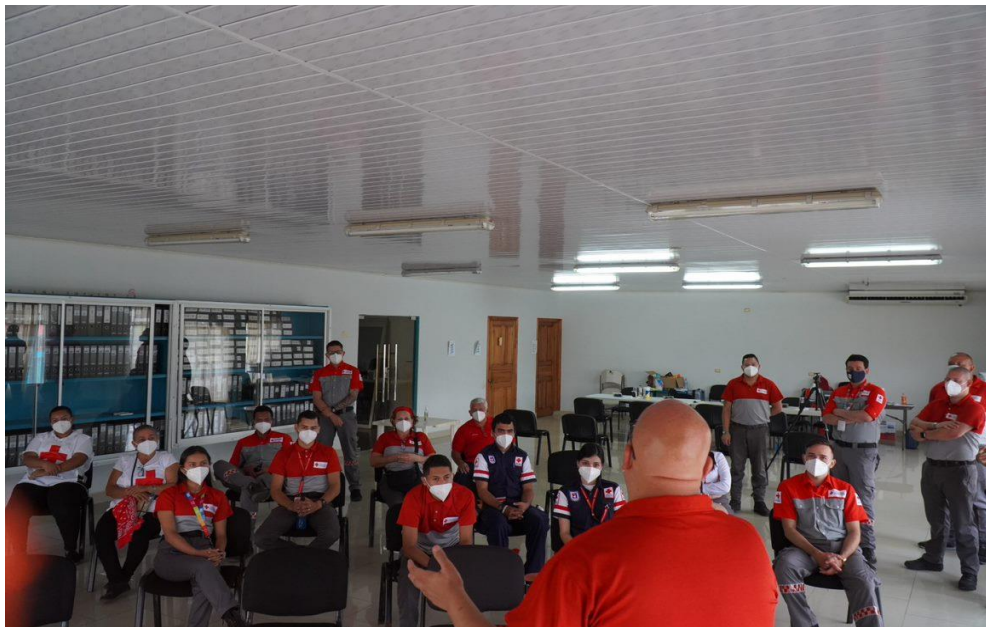
Indicators:	Target	Actual
IFRC provides support to the NS during the 3 months of the operation	Yes	Yes
Output S2.1.4: Supply chain and fleet services meet recognized quality and accountability standards		
# of Rapid Response Personnel deployed	1	-
# of monitoring visits by IFRC delegates	3	-

Narrative description of achievements

The National Society has the human resources to carry out the activities.

Two field technicians were hired to work on Livelihoods and Water and Sanitation.

A talk was given to volunteer staff before activities were implemented in targeted regions, the focus of which is based on the activity to be implemented and to address security issues and the necessary COVID-19 prevention measures.



Talk to staff in Zona Norte – Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

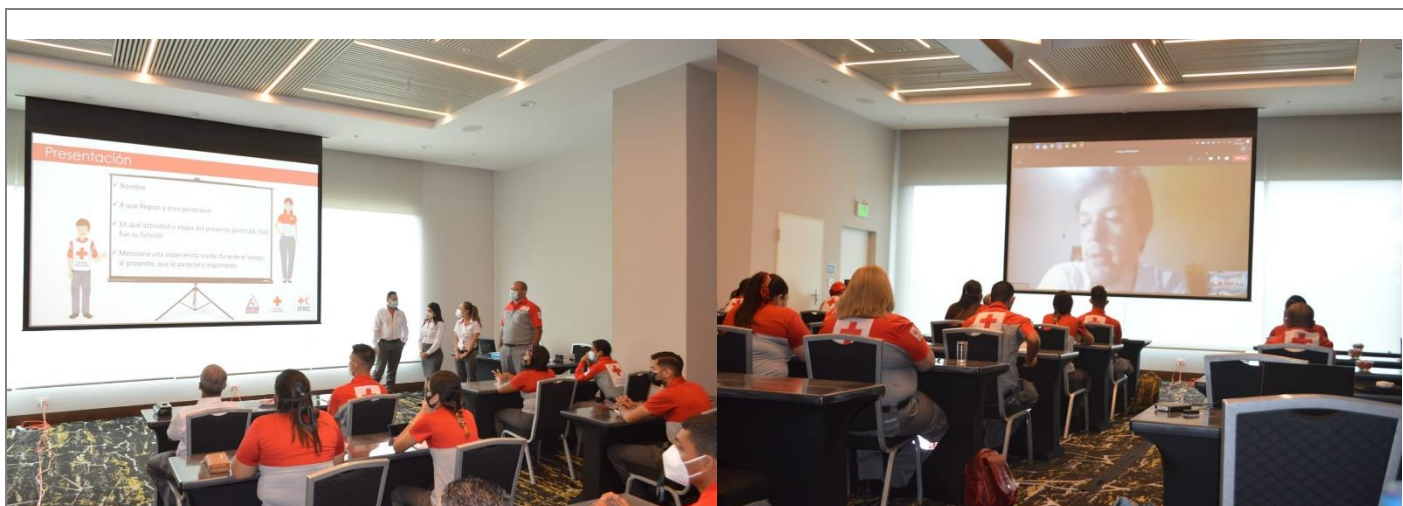
Community feedback systems were established (including rumour and/or CEA monitoring), and feedback was acted upon and used to improve the operation, in this case by setting up three phone lines (2 for the CVA team and 1 for the WASH team) and an email that allowed people to make contact for queries or comments and to clarify rumours.

European Union staff, the Canadian Ambassador to Costa Rica as well as the Canadian embassy Public Affairs Officer visited the project.

The lessons learned workshop was carried out in two phases. The first phase involved management, administrative and financial personnel, who were presented with the entire operation process and respective timeline, while the second phase involved operational staff and volunteers from the different targeted regions.

Opportunities for improvement and actions that merit replicating were identified during both phases, especially:

- Identifying a more streamlined procurement process regarding time and payment to suppliers.
- Improving internal communications.
- Participation of volunteer staff in different regions.



Lessons learned workshop – Source: Costa Rican Red Cross

There were no rapid response personnel deployed or IFRC monitoring visits in the field due to the COVID-related travel constraints. During the implementation, there were weekly calls between CRRC and the IFRC Americas Regional Office as part of the support and monitoring efforts to ensure that the committed activities were on track and implemented according to the plan.

Challenges

Finding a venue in which to hold lesson learned workshop activities.

Getting attendees to confirm their participation.

Lessons learned

Having volunteers, administrative and operational personnel participate resulted in a workshop with a lot of learning and input from all levels

D. FINANCIAL REPORT

Please see the attached [Financial Report](#).

Contact information

Reference documents

Click here for:

- [DREF Plan of Action \(PoA\)](#)

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

In the Costa Rican Red Cross:

- Dyanne Marengo Gonzalez, National Society President, dyanne.marengo@cuzroja.or.cr;
- Jim Batres Rodríguez, Deputy Operations Manager jim.batres@cuzroja.or.cr; +506 88433000
- Luis Guzman Brenes, Risk Management Director, luis.guzman@cuzroja.or.cr; +506 88847497
- David Picado Luna, Project Coordinator DINAGER davi.picado@cuzroja.or.cr; +506 88379283

In the IFRC:

- Head of the IFRC Country Cluster for Central America: Nelson Aly nelson.alyrodriguez@ifrc.org
- IFRC Disaster, Climate and Crisis Director: Prevention, Response and Recovery Department: Roger Alonso, roger.morgui@ifrc.org
- IFRC Continental Operations Manager: Felipe del Cid felipe.delcid@ifrc.org
- Partnership and Resource Development Manager: Sandra Romero sandra.romero@ifrc.org
- Communications Manager: Susana Arroyo, susana.arroyo@ifrc.org
- Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Manager: María Larios maria.larios@ifrc.org
- Regional Logistics Coordinator: Mauricio Bustamante mauricio.bustamante@ifrc.org
-

In IFRC Geneva

- Senior DREF Officer: Eszter Matyeka, eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org
- Senior Operations Coordination Officer: Antoine Belair, antoine.belair@ifrc.org

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 Humanitarian 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.

DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2021/7-2021/12	Operation	MDRCR019
Budget Timeframe	2021/7-2021/10	Budget	APPROVED

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared on 27/Jan/2022

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRCR019 - Costa Rica - Floods

Operating Timeframe: 27 Jul 2021 to 31 Oct 2021

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	362,366
DREF Allocations	362,366
Expenditure	-340,110
Closing Balance	22,256

II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction			0
AOF2 - Shelter			0
AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs	246,494	246,933	-439
AOF4 - Health			0
AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene	81,153	67,876	13,277
AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion	533	533	0
AOF7 - Migration			0
Area of focus Total	328,180	315,342	12,838
SFI1 - Strengthen National Societies	24,282	24,036	246
SFI2 - Effective international disaster management	9,905	732	9,173
SFI3 - Influence others as leading strategic partners			0
SFI4 - Ensure a strong IFRC			0
Strategy for implementation Total	34,187	24,767	9,419
Grand Total	362,366	340,110	22,257

DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2021/7-2021/12	Operation	MDRCR019
Budget Timeframe	2021/7-2021/10	Budget	APPROVED

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared on 27/Jan/2022

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRCR019 - Costa Rica - Floods

Operating Timeframe: 27 Jul 2021 to 31 Oct 2021

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	56,250	44,385	11,865
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	52,500	40,560	11,940
Utensils & Tools	3,750	3,825	-75
Logistics, Transport & Storage	3,500	2,632	868
Distribution & Monitoring	3,000	1,236	1,764
Logistics Services	500	1,396	-896
General Expenditure	9,300	1,470	7,830
Travel	6,000		6,000
Information & Public Relations	1,000	640	360
Office Costs	900		900
Communications	900		900
Financial Charges	500	830	-330
Contributions & Transfers	271,200	270,864	336
Cash Transfers National Societies	271,200	270,864	336
Indirect Costs	22,116	20,758	1,358
Programme & Services Support Recover	22,116	20,758	1,358
Grand Total	362,366	340,110	22,257