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DREF Final Report

Panama: Population Movement

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRPA015	
Date of Issue: 29 June 2022	
Operation start date: 19 August 2021	Operation end date: 28 February 2022 (3-month extension)
Operation budget: 481,430 Swiss Fracs (CHF) including 171,953 CHF as second allocation	
Number of people affected: 71,821	Number of people assisted: 72,321
Host National Society: The Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) has 1,666 volunteers and 90 staff and is organized in 23 branches.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC), National Border Service (SENAFRONT), Ministry of Health (MINSAs), National Migration Service (SNM), Office of the First Lady of Panama, National Mental Health Institute (INSAM), National Children, Adolescent and Family Secretariat (SENNIAF), Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders (MSF), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Relief & Resilience through Education in Transition International (RET International), as well as other civil society organizations and churches.	
The Red Cross Society of Panama spent a total of 385,461 CHF. The remaining balance of 95,969 CHF will be returned to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund.	
The major donors and partners, of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) included 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 Red Cross Society of Panama, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.	

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

According to the registers of the National Migration Service of Panama (SNM by his acronym in Spanish), between January and July 2021, 45,150 migrants (33,077 adults and 12,073 children)¹ arrived in Panama from Colombia after crossing the jungle of Darien, which represents the highest figure recorded in the last 6 years, in 2016 (30,065), and has also exceeded almost 42% of the total number of migrants registered during 2019 (22,102).

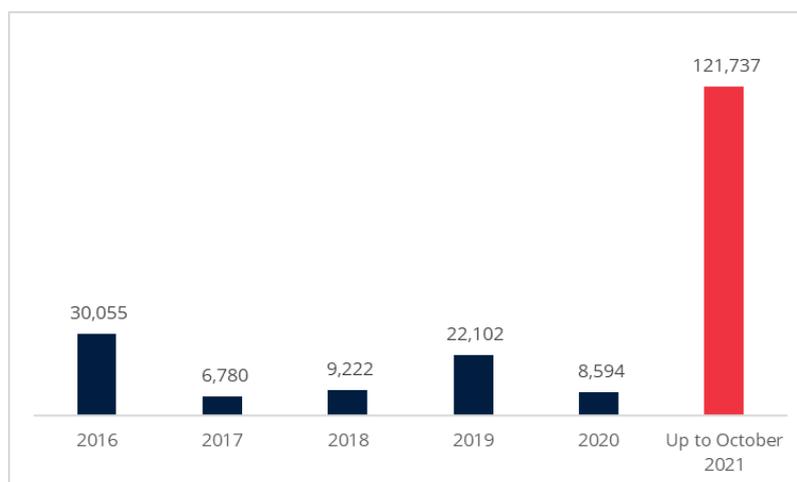
According to SNM in Panama, the number of migrants crossing from the Colombian border to Darien increased by 89% in July 2020, compared to the flow in June.

To respond to this increase in migration flows, the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP) launched in August 2021, an initial DREF Operation of 309,477 Swiss francs (CHF) to meet ongoing needs of 6,000 people in the Darién Gap ([MDRPA015 DREF Plan of Action](#)).

Due to the increase in needs and the continuous migratory movement in the Darién Gap, where an average of 700 to 1,000 people were crossing every day between June and October 2021, the RCSP decided to review its original plan and the operation timeframe for additional three months (until 28 February 2022). It also included an additional allocation of 171,953 CHF (total budget of 481,430 CHF). (See [MDRPA015 DREF Operation Update no. 1](#)). Expanding the scope of the operation was justified in the face of a significant and sustained increase in the flow of migrants in and transiting through the Darién Gap, as well as the continued high risks associated with migration routes and the affected communities in the region. The new objective aimed to reach 11,000 migrating people over six months, extending the services and including an additional activity of distribution of jerrycans as per pressing identified needs from the field.

Due to its geographic position, Panama is a natural point of entry for migrating populations. Nationals from more than 45 countries across its borders daily. Since 2012, there has been a significant increase in the number of individuals who enter the Darién Gap irregularly. In 2020, of the 6,445 people who crossed the border between Colombia and Panama, 26% were children and adolescents. Between January and June 2021, 15,949 migrants in total entered the region. This number rose to 94,693 between July and October 2021, representing a 600% increase from the previous six months. As a result, between January and October 2021, 121,737 people crossed this same border, with a sharp rise first observed in June and sustained in all subsequent months (see figure 1 below). From September 2021 to February 2022, there were a total of 71,789 migrants that arrived at the time of the DREF implementation (see figure 2 below).

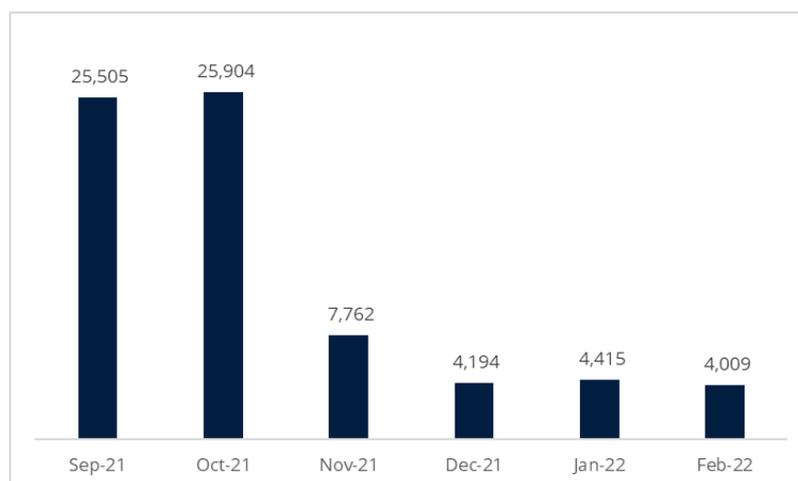
Figure 1 – Migratory flow in Darien 2016 to 2021²



¹ SNM. [Irregular transit of foreigners - July 2021](#)

² Panama National Migration Service, [Transito irregular por la frontera por Colombia, 2021](#)

Figure 2 – Migratory flow in Darien – September 2021 to February 2022³



As of 28 February 2022, the objective to reach 11,000 affected migrants was surpassed reaching a total of 35,911 migrants traveling through the Darien border and being supported by the RCSP.

Migrant routes changed, and there was a reduction in the number of migrants reaching the Migrant Reception Stations (ERM by its acronym in Spanish) (200-300 migrants per day), which allowed the RCSP to develop an exit strategy to continue providing services with multilateral and bilateral funding.

Summary of response

Overview of Host National Society

Aiming to prevent suffering and reduce the vulnerabilities and needs of migrants, the Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP), with the support of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), began planning its response to the population movement in 2015. The provision of humanitarian services began 1 December 2015, when the National Society activated its first humanitarian assistance activities for migrants in Puerto Obaldia, on the border between Colombia and Panama: Population Movement, [DREF Operation no. MDRPA011](#). As part of the [regional Population Movement Emergency Appeal](#), the National Society has worked with the IFRC to provide humanitarian assistance to people on the move in Darién, increasing its capacity and positioning itself in the field as a specialized and experienced actor.

The National Society continued to assist migrant populations and became one of the most important actors in the region, prioritizing services according to context and needs. The RCSP worked alongside the IFRC and collaborated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to ensure access to Restoring Family Links (RFL) protection supports (see figure 3).

Between December 2019 and 30 September 2021, the RCSP supported more than 40,000 people through humanitarian assistance and services provided in the field, supporting different inter-agency coordinating committees, operations, and programs.

The National Society is aware that emergency responses also create opportunities for further organizational development and that lessons learned workshops are crucial to enhance decision-making strategies. Workshops were held following the 2015 DREF. In June 2021, after the end of the regional Population Movement Emergency Appeal, and more recently in September 2021, in the context of the Darién response.

As mentioned previously, there was a sharp increase in cross-border movement beginning June 2021. The RCSP scaled up its response in Darién but could not meet the basic needs of people transiting through the region. Consequently, the National Society, the IFRC, and the ICRC joined forces and convened a series of high-level

³ Panama National Migration Service, [Transito irregular por la frontera por Colombia, 2022](#)

meetings with Panamanian authorities in June 2021. The objective was to draw attention to the increased humanitarian impacts and the genuine threat to the sustainability of services provided.

To maintain a strong presence in the Darien for the months of August 2021 through February 2022, the RCSP increased their support to the Migrant population by increasing the services at the Migrant Reception Centres. These services included increased WASH activities, increased the number of distributions of transit kits, hygiene kits, services to Restore Family Links (RFL) and basic first aid attention and relating public health activities.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

Through the General Director, the National Society maintains constant communication with Partner National Societies (PNS) present in the country through regional delegations. The American Red Cross (ARC) offers support to the RCSP in organizational development. The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) has collaborated bilaterally with the RCSP on health-related activities linked to COVID-19. In addition, from August to February, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for volunteers, and staff and distribution kits for migrants were purchased and distributed through DREF resources. Adding to the COVID-19 PPE, two in-house briefings were conducted to review the safety and health protocols for working with migrants in a highly unprotected environment. One briefing focused on working with migrants, and the other related to workspace and social distancing. Both briefings were conducted in January of 2022.

The IFRC Americas Regional Office and the Regional Logistics Unit (RLU) are in Panama. The RCSP coordinated its actions with the IFRC Regional Office's Disaster and Crisis Prevention Department. Since 2019, the IFRC has supported the National Society in Darién with dedicated staff through the regional Emergency Appeal and support from a UNICEF project.

This allocation focused on supporting urgent needs. Nevertheless, on the current complex migratory flows in the region, the risks, and humanitarian needs, the IFRC has developed a Case for Support proposal to define an intervention logic adapted to mixed flows, considering regional and local capacities. This approach seeks to consolidate a comprehensive and sustainable preparedness, response, and recovery model that allows National Societies to maintain the mid and long-term assistance⁴ to the humanitarian needs of migrants in countries of origin, transit, and destination. It will support durable solutions backed by a solid strategic, programmatic framework and resource mobilisation.

The IFRC regularly leads coordination meetings with the National Society and other Movement components involved in the regional population movement response: Colombian Red Cross, Costa Rican Red Cross, and the ICRC. More than ten meetings have been held since June 2021. Shared objectives include open communication, heightened coordination, and validation of information relevant to all operations, in the context of regional and extracontinental migratory flows, from Chile to Guatemala. The August 2021 earthquake in Haiti, for example, led to a concerted increase in RFL and information services along the route.

Since the onset of the response, the ICRC has collaborated with the RCSP to support its volunteers and provide RFL services through call points. In organizational development, the ICRC allocated funding for a PGI field position within the RCSP. The ICRC has also engaged with the authorities to foster better inter-institutional coordination, focusing on strengthening the response to protection issues and needs. Additionally, the ICRC promotes and shares forensic best practices with the Panamanian authorities. It also works with members of the National Border Service, SENAFRONT, to remind them of the principles governing force use.

In addition, the operations were supported by delegates from the Uruguayan Red Cross, Costa Rican Red Cross, Nicaraguan Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross and the American Red Cross. These individual human resources were directly related to supporting the RCSP in Darien with the influx of increasing numbers of migrants arriving at the Migrant Receptions Centres. Several National Societies supported the RCSP with field coordination to implement the DREF and related activities. Field coordination to support the RCSP included directly working with the logistics services of the IFRC to obtain the appropriate number of kits for distributions and WASH support for activities relating to hygiene and water production workshops. PGI support collecting information regarding safety and gender protection through brochures (in French, Portuguese, English and Spanish) with details regarding the

⁴ [La Estrella de Panama, The IACHR orders Panama to include migrants in the vaccination against Covid-19, July 2021](#)

migration routes through the Central American corridor and related information to migrants regarding gender protection services. The RCSP was providing to Migrants at the Migrant Receiving Areas.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

Actor	Actions
International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs)	
Médecins sans Frontières (MSF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical team in the Bajo Chiquito ERM (permanent service point). • Rotating medical teams in the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente Estaciones de Recepcion Migratoria (ERMs Migrant Reception Station, by its acronym in Spanish). • Medical, psychological and logistics personnel.
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotating teams in the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs. • Support underage survivors of sexual violence. • Violence prevention activities. • Menstrual health and hygiene workshops and support.
Relief & Resilience through Education in Transition International (RET International)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotating teams in the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs. • Child-friendly spaces. • Psychosocial support for children.
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, assistance and legal counsel to asylum seekers and refugees in Panama for all 3 ERMs.
United Nations Agencies	
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall monitoring of children's needs in the region. • Child case management support. • Funding and support to implementing partners (including the PRCSSS) in child and maternal health, WASH and child protection.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

At the beginning of the emergency intervention, the operation was carried out within the 2 active ERMs in Metetí, where the migrants arrived after their travel through the Darién Gap, a 266-kilometer jungle area, with the objective to cross Central America, reach Mexico, and finally, make their way to the United States. By August 2021, when the number of people migrating increased drastically, the Bajo Chiquito and Lajas Blancas arrival routes were being used, and the community of Canaan Membrillo was beginning to be positioned as a possible arrival route. The authorities had the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs in operation, but they were not sufficient for the number of people arriving. However, by February 2022, at the close of this operation, the authorities only housed migrants in the San Vicente MRE, keeping the Lajas Blancas ERM closed, and a change of routes was visualized, with the Canaan Membrillo community as a priority arrival route.



Shelter

In the Darién region, shelter management was coordinated and led by SENAFRONT and the IOM after adopting a strategic plan.

At the beginning of this intervention, in the *Bajo Chiquito ERM* (Migrant Reception Station, by its acronym in Spanish), 90% of the migrant population lived in small individual tents, which they acquired along the way. The host community identified specific spaces for tents rented by landowners to migrating individuals and families. The community, with support from SENAFRONT, was responsible for managing the tent areas. Local infrastructure in Bajo Chiquito was insufficient to accommodate the drastic increase in new arrivals. From

August to November 2021, there were instances where the total number of migrants in the community exceeded 2,000.

By the end of the intervention, this ERM was almost inactive; since October 2021, migrants began to use other arrival routes, which ensured a shorter route and Bajo Chiquito stopped receiving migrants. The needs at the time of the closure of this operation revolved around the community, whose livelihoods were affected, created on the basis of the people in mobility in the area.

At the beginning of this intervention, the *Lajas Blancas ERM*, which opened between 2015-2016, had a capacity of 400 people, and family-size wooden structures were used for communal use services. The ERM counted two Rubb Halls tents (large, relocatable tent-like structures); one of them, partially damaged, was used as an isolation ward for COVID-19 positive. The deterioration of this ERM did not allow to provide decent services to migrants, at the beginning of this operation several supports were given for the improvement of community spaces, as they needed shaded areas, and gravel to prevent the accumulation of mud and health spaces closer to the arrival by canoes.

At the end of this intervention, this ERM was no longer being used by decision of the authorities, although the ERM has new facilities, made by the IOM (capacity for 460 people, which includes small wooden houses for 260 of those 460), as well as specific spaces to provide health services, the authorities have decided to close this ERM. This could have been the result of the change of migratory routes and the decline of migrants in transit in the months of December 2021 and January 2022.

As for the *San Vicente ERM*, it was built between July and September 2020. Its installations are relatively new, are connected to the national power grid, and have a maximum capacity of 400. Two types of shelter were initially installed: Refugee Housing Units (RHU), and plastic family tents. By the end of this operation, most of the tents were deteriorated and unused, with the better part of the migrant population choosing to put up individual tents instead and rest in the community spaces.

This is the only ERM that was still active at the close of this operation and is where all the immigrants arriving from Canan Membrillo were sheltered.



Health

The RCSP, with IFRC support, provides health services through its Humanitarian Service Point. Maternal and child health are prioritized, with nutrition identified as a primary concern. Services are provided five days/weeks in the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs, and bimonthly in the Bajo Chiquito ERM, which is accessible only by boat. Services include working with migrant families, affected individuals and migrants physically hurt during the journey.

Through the period of the operation, these services increased to assisting migrants with several wounds to their feet and skin due to the harsh conditions of the Darien environment. Many children were malnourished because of drinking contaminated water and overexposure to sun and heat. Ambulatory teams, social-psychological teams, and nurses were identified as essential personnel in both the ERMs and the communities where migrants arrived before reaching the ERM.

The RCSP has reinforced its services, in coordination with UNICEF and the IFRC, by integrating two new health staff into the existing Humanitarian Service Point team.

Through its Humanitarian Service Point and Health teams, regularly deployed in the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs, the RCSP has continued its health promotion activities, including sexual and reproductive health, maternal health, mental health, and COVID-19 prevention.

In Bajo Chiquito, the small health centre is supported by MSF and MINSAs teams, though health supplies remain limited. The RCSP, with support from the IFRC, has provided MSF with essential medication, stretchers, and hygiene kits.

Since August 2021, the demand for health care has risen drastically, in line with the large number of migrants arriving daily in the ERMs. The extreme travel conditions experienced in the jungle generate increased health care needs. Reported cases include dehydration, malnutrition, arterial hypertension, injuries and wounds in the

extremities (feet, hands), respiratory problems, gastrointestinal infections, dermatological disorders, and requests for reproductive health services. The cumulative stress and fatigue experienced by health personnel and the limited availability of health supplies remain essential challenges.

The trend in age and time was noticed in the migrant community travelling thru the Darien to the ERMs. More men and women between 18 and 45 were reported to the ERMs in January. This trend was seen in 2021 as well.

The difficulties and uncertainties of the migratory journey also take their toll: requests for psychosocial and psychological assistance are increasing. RET International, with support from UNICEF, provided psychosocial support services to children in the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs.

The health care service areas are located some distance away from the ERM points of entry. When migrants first disembark from the canoes, open wounds in the lower extremities, heat exhaustion, weakness, and dehydration are often observed. Deploying safe and adequate equipment to facilitate the transport of patients, such as stretchers and wheelchairs, remains a priority.

Overcrowding, lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), sporadic cleaning measures, and insufficient sanitary installations are also common to all three ERMs. Preventing the spread of COVID-19 through the promotion of hygiene practices is challenging but highly necessary.



Water, Sanitation and Health promotion (WaSH)

Access to safe drinking water has a direct impact on the health of migrant populations. The RCSP, with support from the IFRC and UNICEF, has installed and is currently operating water treatment plants in the Lajas Blancas, San Vicente and Bajo Chiquito ERMs, and in the La Peñita community.

The Panama Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers (IDAAN) has responded to the National Migration Service (SNM) request to augment water supply to ERMs and host communities. Still, it is struggling to meet the needs. None are currently in the function of the three solar-powered water treatment plants initially installed by SINAPROC in the Lajas Blancas ERM. Safe drinking water is provided on-site, including in the COVID-19 isolation areas, through the RCSP water treatment plant and its associated distribution network⁵.

Water systems have come under stress due to the sharp rise in people transiting through the Darién Gap. In the San Vicente ERM, where most of the water used to fulfil essential necessities comes from the local municipal water supply, the host community is now facing water shortages. In the Lajas Blancas ERM, where overcrowding has been significant, efforts are underway to augment the production capacity of the RCSP water plant. In both the Lajas Blancas and the Bajo Chiquito ERMs, water pumps function for extended periods to meet demand, resulting in more frequent breakages. Interruptions, however brief, have an immediate impact on family groups and individuals, as sources of free, safe drinking water are otherwise non-existent.

The current difficulties of the climate, including heavy rains and high levels of humidity, require constant monitoring and maintenance of the water treatment plants and their associated water distribution system. As the region entered its dry season at the end of December, another risk was rearing its head: a sudden decrease in water levels in the region, specifically in the rivers used by the RCSP water treatment plants.

Sanitary installations are scarce in all three ERMs. Showers, toilets, and hand-washing stations are insufficient in number, and maintenance work has been neglected. The RCSP, with support from the IFRC and UNICEF, has undertaken urgent repairs to preserve the dignity of individuals.

The joint RCSP - IFRC - UNICEF WASH Strategy, revised and updated in October 2021, focuses on providing access to safe drinking water, distributing hygiene kits, and implementing hygiene promotion activities. Distributions remain crucial as most migrants reach the ERMs with very few personal possessions, much less the essentials required to ensure personal hygiene. As for hygiene promotion, activities centred on hand-washing practices and targeted messaging through group workshops to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Lack of signage and visual, universal messaging was also identified as a difficulty by newly-arrived individuals and family groups, who sometimes struggle to understand the layout of ERMs. The RCSP, with support from the

⁵ Evaluation report – Panama Population Movement – September 2021

IFRC, mapped all water and sanitation service points in both the Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs, and produced and displayed simplified plans of the sites in key locations.

In addition to WASH activities in the three main ERMs areas, hygiene kits and transit kits were given to migrants upon arrival. These kits were adapted in January to include jerry cans.



Migration

The RCSP, with support from the IFRC and the ICRC, has implemented Restoring Family Links (RFL) services, mostly oriented towards connectivity access. The goal is to allow migrating populations to share their current situation and location with family and friends abroad. Since individuals face tragic situations during travel, including losing loved ones, accessing their support system is essential.

There is a need to continue strengthening staff and volunteer knowledge and understanding of migration issues. The migratory context in the Darién Gap is constantly evolving; differentiated assistance to populations must be regularly revisited and adjusted. To build capacity in this regard, the RCSP has developed a Migration Policy, which clearly articulates its strategy, mandate, and determination to provide quality, needs-based support to migrating populations.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI)

Protection activities are crucial. Migrating populations are exposed to the dangers of long-distance travel, violence, wild animals and unfamiliar natural environments, unforeseen separations from loved ones, and numerous health issues. The greater part of reported incidents involves women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community⁶.

Women who cross the Darién Gap face a violent and discriminatory social environment. They report various manifestations of violence, including physical harm, sexual abuse, rape, kidnapping, extortion, exploitation, and trafficking. The latter is linked to drug trafficking and other illicit activities in the region. The situation is difficult and requires both united efforts and robust coordination mechanisms among government actors with protection mandates, such as the National Migration Service (SNM), the National Children, Adolescent and Family Secretariat (SENNIAF), the Ministry of the Public Prosecutor, the National Border Service (SENAFRONT), the Ministry of Health (MINSA), the National Disability Secretariat (SENADIS), and the Ombudsman Office (Defensoría del Pueblo). In support of established public services, humanitarian organizations also joined forces to enhance child protection and develop a differentiated approach to migration protection issues.

Despite sustained interventions and the creation of coordination and engagement mechanisms, both migrating populations and members of host communities still frequently face protection issues. Individuals in transit and the organizations who support them have identified protection risks from Colombia and all through the Darién Gap, as well as in the ERMs themselves. According to data collected in the field, the most reported protection issues include lack of access to specialized health services, sexual and gender-based violence, forced displacement and persecution, and mental health issues.

Interagency committees were established to develop common minimum standards and referral paths to address those risks in a concerted manner. The shared objective is to advocate for measures and resources in line with the needs observed. Standardized referral paths do exist, but their implementation has only been partial. This represents an important risk for the individuals themselves and given the commitments undertaken by institutions and organizations. In accordance with the latter, the RCSP is overseeing the creation of a Protection Group to review and analyse the use and efficiency of existing referral paths and follow protection trends in the field. The aim is to collect quantitative and qualitative data on the operational management of protection issues, enhance processes, and improve support for migrating populations.

⁶ [Las políticas migratorias en América latina ante los recientes flujos intra y extrarregionales, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, April 2020.](#)

Risk Analysis

There were two different scenarios during the intervention. First, between September and October, more than 50,000 people crossed through the Darién, exceeding what had been anticipated at the time, requiring the support of all the humanitarian organizations on the ground and adequate coordination with the authorities. Then, in the month of December the flow began to decrease, leaving the last quarter of the intervention with a low or moderate flow, between 100 and 145 people per day, still a high flow of people on the move, but with a greater probability of being attended and receiving services according to their needs.

Scenario planning

Scenario Planning Scenario	Humanitarian Consequence	Potential Response
<p>Best-case scenario: Decrease in or usual flow of migrating populations, compared to estimates for the period of August to October. ~11,000 people/month. Duration of stay ~1 to 2 days.</p>	<p>Humanitarian assistance is provided to people who require it. The short duration of stays means the level of assistance provided is sufficient to meet demand without major setbacks.</p>	<p>Maintain close coordination with the authorities for the provision of humanitarian assistance based on the analysis of needs that have not yet been met. Response planning for both actions and resources does not require significant changes.</p>
<p>Most likely scenario: Increase in flow of migrating populations arriving in Panama, compared to estimates for the period of August to October. ~16,000 people/month, with increase of up to 5,000 people for each subsequent month.</p>	<p>Services are not sufficient, given the increasing volume of people. Impacts on the environment (waste management) are observed. Health, water, and sanitation services are saturated. Despite the short duration of stay, the volume of people requiring assistance extends the length of working days for humanitarian actors in the field. Health care</p>	<p>Coordination with other actors is strengthened. Mental health and psychosocial support are provided to both the target population and personnel in the field. PGI strategies are applied. Humanitarian assistance in WASH and health is reinforced. Surge resources are deployed in the field to ensure assistance continues to be provided according to Do No Harm principle.</p>

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Proposed strategy

The RCSP aims to continue providing humanitarian assistance to populations who transit through the Darién Gap. The proposed actions were concentrated on the points of attention in the Bajo Chiquito, Lajas Blancas and San Vicente ERMs, and in the La Peñita community, based on needs and operational demands.

The strategic approach was based on the RCSP's contingency plan, whose care coverage began with the objective to reach 6,000 people. Due to the sharp rise in daily arrivals, the target population was increased to 11,000 people. A surplus balance on the initial allocation of 309,477 CHF was reattributed to procurement items for immediate use in the field: light blankets, tarpaulins, first aid kits, and essential health supplies.

Therefore, the revised objective was to scale up assistance services to migrating populations who were crossing the border between Colombia and Panama, and subsequently the Darién Gap. According to the National Border Service (SENAFRONT), numbers were expected to rise over the following quarter.

All actions were carried out following the role established by the humanitarian mandate of the National Society in the country and the international standards of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in line with the context-specific to the Darién Gap and the global migration strategy. The National Society looked to continue to provide humanitarian assistance in its role as auxiliary to the public authorities in shelter; health; water, sanitation and hygiene; migration; and protection, gender and inclusion.

UNICEF and AECID also had a strategic role to play in the operation and to further support the RCSP with forwarding planning to continue the activities beyond the DREF operational timeline. WASH activities will continue and the distribution of hygiene kits to the ERMs and the communities impacted by migration. This positive intervention of forecasting the need to continue these activities beyond the DREF timeline by UNICEF and AECID allows the RCSP to continue to maintain a positive presence in the ERMs and the communities mentioned above.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN



Shelter

People reached: 13,000

Male: 8,450 (65% approx.)

Female: 4,550 (35 % approx.)

Shelter Outcome 1: Communities in disaster and crisis affected areas restore and strengthen their safety, well-being and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of persons provided with emergency shelter items, materials and/or tools to have a space that meets the minimum living conditions	8,000	13,000

Shelter Output 1.1: Shelter and settlements and basic household items assistance is provided to the affected persons.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of persons provided with household items (at least one item)	8,000	13,000

Narrative description of achievements

The RCSP aimed to provide safe and dignified spaces to migrating populations who reach ERMs. With this objective in mind, improvements to temporary installations were undertaken.

Designated waiting areas in all ERMs are overcrowded due to the increase in daily arrivals, harsh weather conditions, and general physical exhaustion of migrating populations. Through the DREF, **50 tarpaulins** were acquired and the RCSP has installed them in health service areas and near water taps to provide shade and shelter from the rain. Others were used to make gravel and stone roads in Lajas Blancas, they were used as a base so that the gravel would not sink. However, giving sustainable enhancements remains a significant challenge since temporary infrastructures in ERMs are rustic, if not improvised, and shift according to the flow of people.



Migrants in EMR Lajas Blancas using the tarpaulins installed by RCSP. Source: IFRC November 2021.

The Lajas Blancas and Bajo Chiquito ERMs are characterized by the perpetually temporary and changing nature of their installations. The RCSP succeeded in identifying durable and easy to re-install in a changing environment. Living areas, as well as the COVID-19 isolation ward, were effectively fenced in. Tarpaulins were installed in the same spaces, though shade

netting has proven challenging to implement. It is also important to note that both ERMs are located in flood-prone areas.

For this operation, the RCSP procured **13,000 light blankets**, and distributed them as a complement to hygiene kits, in health service areas and other distributions points in ERMs. Migrating individuals and families have been observed using the blankets for various uses: in sleeping areas, to provide shade, and as clothing for infants and small children. The total target includes additional blankets that the NS had prepositioned.



Migrants arriving in the Lajas Blancas ERM in Darien where they are provided with a personal hygiene kit and blankets. Source: RCSP

Challenges

- Continuing to advocate for safe and dignified spaces for migrating populations.
- The harshness of the climate, accelerates the rate of deterioration and decay of existing installations.
- Lack of buildings or longer-lasting installations in the Lajas Blancas and Bajo Chiquito ERMs, and the level of creativity required to carry out improvements.
- Accessing a variety of materials (gravel, posts, fences) to augment the safety of existing spaces.

Lessons Learned

- It is necessary to plan actions based on different scenarios. For the first part of this operation, inputs were provided to improve the Lajas Blancas shelter intervention; however, in a short time the panorama changed, and the Lajas Blancas ERM was no longer functional and many of the improvements made by various humanitarian actors were no longer used.
- Include in future interventions more structured blankets and shelter kits that allow the children (as a priority) to stay dry and warm during the rains.



Health⁷

People reached: 6,100

Male: 3,965 (65% approx.)

Female: 2,135 (35 % approx.)

⁷ All health services included in the DREF Operation were designed to complement existing health activities and interventions funded by UNICEF, through a joint project initiated in May 2021. Indicators take into account individuals and families reached through all health services in the field, regardless of the source of funding, for the period of September 2021 to February 2022.

Health Outcome 2: The immediate risks to the health of the affected populations are reduced through improved access to medical treatment.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with health activities.	8,000	5,009
# of people receiving first aid services.	8,000	5,009
# of ambulances supporting the operational activities.	1	1

Health Output 2.1: Improved access to health care and emergency health care for the targeted population and communities.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of persons that received COVID-19 PPE kits	6,500	6,100

Health Output 3: The psychosocial impacts of the emergency are lessened.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with psychosocial support	1,000	478

Output 3.1: Psychosocial support provided to the target population as well as to RCRC volunteers and staff.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people provided with PSS support	1,000	456
# of PSS kits are procured and distributed to the targeted population	1,000	456
# of volunteers that receive PSS	100	22

Narrative description of achievements



RCSP providing health services in ERM San Vicente. Source: RCSP, November 2021.

Health services were centered on child and maternal health, pregnant and lactating women, and nutrition, but the RCSP also provided primary, immediate care in ERMs to all who require it. Health service areas are also the first contact for mental health and psychosocial support: proximity creates space for personal exchanges. Families and individuals share the hardships they experienced along the migratory route.

The health services areas are perceived mainly as safe spaces by members of the target population. Most display high levels of trust towards RCSP health personnel, who play a crucial role in providing immediate care and in completing referrals. Complementarity between RCSP health teams and partners in the field was crucial, and services were designed to ensure access to a comprehensive continuum of assistance.

The Humanitarian Service Point also provided essential frontline services. However, the focus is more decidedly put on preventing the spread of COVID-19 – an important but frequently overlooked health risk due to the acute difficulties experienced by migrating populations. There, RCSP personnel shared key prevention messaging and promoted safe practices for the road ahead. However, since the Ministry of Health is mostly absent

from the field, access to vaccination for families and individuals remains a challenge.

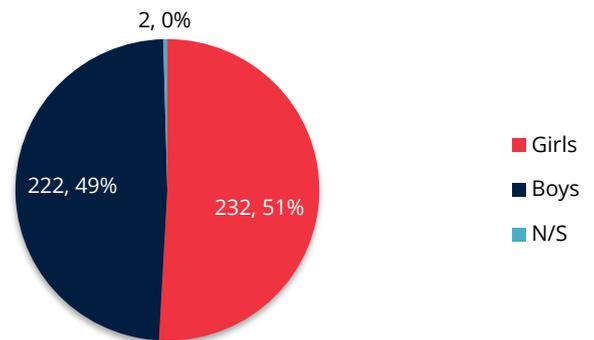
Finally, the growing influx of people has generated a more significant number of high-risk health situations, which require the swift transfer of individuals to regional health centres. In that sense, the acquisition by the RCSP of an ambulance-type vehicle made a real difference in the team’s capacity to provide quality care to migrating populations.

The National Society was able to procure **6,100 PPE kits, 17 first aid kits, 2 wheelchairs, 1 stretcher** and **nutritional supplements**.

A total of **5,009 health services** were provided through these DREF operation (see foot note on indicator above). Also, a total of **456** people were assisted with MHPSS services during the MHPSS kit distributions, prioritizing children. The PSS kits contained a backpack with toys and puppets, coloring books, pencils. The planned number of people to be reached was 1,000, however, it was not possible to achieve this indicator due to delays in the administrative processes, due to the closing of the year 2021.

Two emotional discharge workshops were developed for the **22** volunteers who were part of the operation (emotional self-regulation workshop and emotional debriefing), as part of the psycho-emotional accompaniment process for staff and volunteers, with the support of the deputy field coordinator.

MHPSS kits distributed (by sex)



Children using their MHPSS kits, San Vicente ERM, January 2022. Source: RCSP

Challenges

There have been many limiting factors within the working conditions for the Red Cross persons working in the Darien on Migration support. The psychological toll that response personal encounters on a daily basis is demanding on one's mental capacity. To mitigate these psychological impacts, the RCSP in conjunction with the IFRC field coordination personal identified the need to have an improved approach to understanding what steps to take to ensure mental health needs of the RCSP staff and volunteers but to migrants as well. Given the working environment of the ERMs many challenges were encountered.

Challenges:

- Lack of information relating to RCSP services relating to cleaning, hygiene and brochure information to the migrate population in transit.
- No private attending spaces and privacy, many of the migrants refused to discuss their endeavour in public open areas.
- Need for better transport for both RCSP workers and affected migrants either injured or traumatised.
- Limiting medical staff and doctors and a presence by national governmental institutions such as MINSA.
- Capacity building for purchasing of basic first aid and relief supplies, logistics to transport and storage those items in Darien.
- Communication within the Health Unit can be challenging during the ERMs visits, given the open spaces many of the PRCS workers.

Lessons Learned

- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to address the mental health and psychosocial needs of all RCSP personnel deployed in the field through a three-pronged approach: 1. Support to the field management team in Darién (coordinator and lead roles); 2) Support to volunteers involved in the response; 3) Creation of interagency spaces to support all actors in the field.
- Access specialized resources, external to the response but internal to the Movement, to provide support in the field.
- Operationalize duty of care for personnel in the field by prioritizing mental health and psychosocial support to ensure the sustainability of the response



Water, sanitation and hygiene

People reached: 72,321

Male: 47,009 (65% approx.)

Female: 25,312 (35 % approx.)

WaSH Outcome 4: Immediate reduction in risk of waterborne and water related diseases in targeted communities.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people who improve their access to safe water and hygiene	11,000	72,321 ⁸

WaSH Output 4.1: 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 people provided with safe water	11,000	72,321
# of jerrycans procured and distributed	2,000	2,000

WaSH Output 4.2: Hygiene-related goods (NFIs) which meet Sphere standards and training on how to use those goods is provided to the target population

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people who receive a personal hygiene kit	11,000	11,527

Narrative description of achievements

A joint RCSP - IFRC - UNICEF WaSH Strategy was revised and updated in October 2021. It focused on providing safe drinking water, distributing hygiene kits, and implementing hygiene promotion activities. In September 2021, the RCSP installed a water plant in the **Lajas Blancas ERM** to treat water from the nearby river and satisfy growing demand. The pump used to filter water started to present mechanical problems in October, but these were addressed on time to minimize interruptions in water distribution. Improvements to WaSH installations were also undertaken in September and October, including hand-washing stations and new water faucets in key areas. The RCSP also led a technical assessment of the SENA FRONT water filtration and storage system and issued recommendations to enhance its use. This plant has produced more than 1,127,700 liters of water from September 2021 to February 2022.



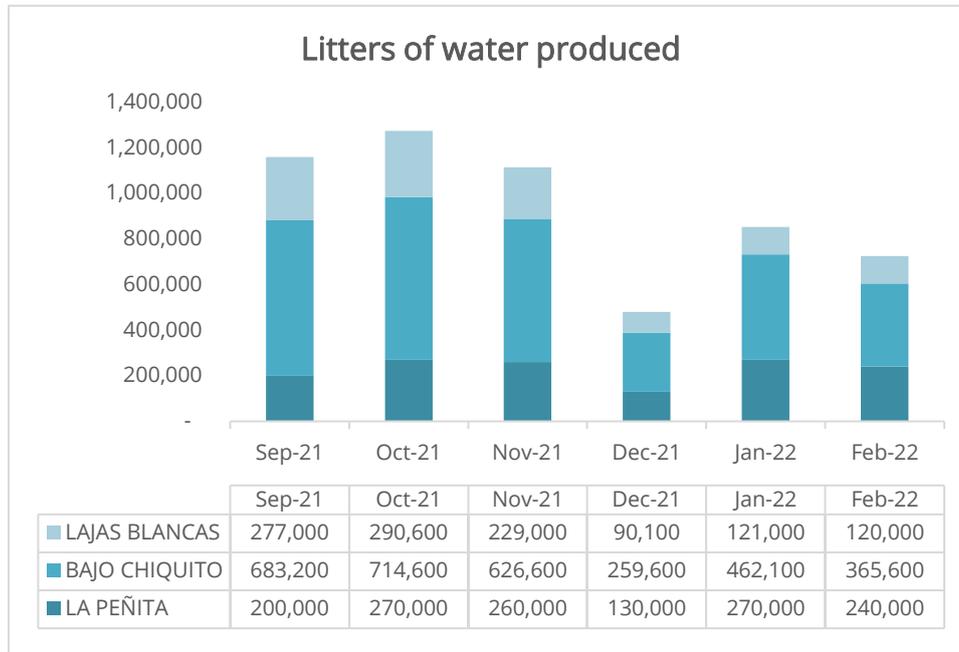
Hand-washing stations installed at different points in the ERM Lajas Blancas. Source: RCSP

Meanwhile, in the **San Vicente ERM**, the team completed reparations on the water vat, with support from UNICEF.

⁸ This figure corresponds to the total people that arrived to Panama through the different access points in the Colombia-Panama between the months of September 2021 and February 2022 (available at <https://www.migracion.gob.pa/inicio/estadisticas>), plus the number of inhabitants in Bajo Chiquito (382 people) and La Peñita (150).

Water production in the **Bajo Chiquito ERM** continued to run smoothly. The system is operated by a motor pump and an electrical pump, which are both solar-powered, and allowed for the distribution of more than 3,111,700 litres of water from September 2021 to February 2022. Local WaSH agents also completed repairs and essential maintenance work, installed new water faucets, and helped MSF build new latrines.

In **La Peñita**, a community of 150 people, the water purification system is operated by 3 motor pumps and allowed for the distribution of more than 1,370,000 liters of water from September 2021 to February 2022. Maintenance was also completed on the equipment to prevent deterioration.

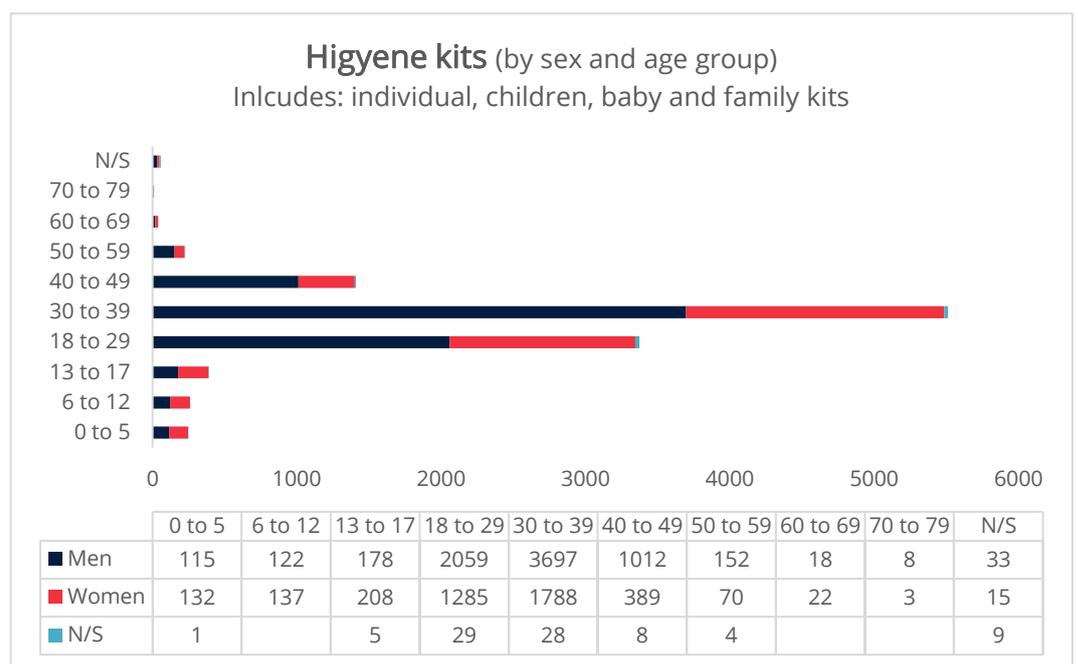


As part of the activities to improve the water distribution areas, this operation contributed the procurement of two truckloads of gravel and a water reserve tank.

2,000 jerrycans were distributed in the communities of Bajo Chiquito and La Peñita. This was the result of a change in the operational strategy because the passage of migrants in the ERMs during the months of December to February was hurried and people did not stay long enough at the station, which made the delivery of a jerrican unsustainable.

Hygiene kit distributions were crucial, as most migrants reach the ERMs with very few personal possessions, much less the essentials required to ensure personal hygiene. A total of **11,527 hygiene kits** were distributed (including family kits, individual kits, children and baby kits), including 500 family kits that in September 2021 were converted into 2,500 individual hygiene kits due to difficulties in the procurement process.

As for hygiene promotion, activities were centred on hand-washing practices and targeted messaging through group workshops to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Challenges

- Rise in demand for safe drinking water in all three ERMs.
- Anticipated dry season, its impacts on river water levels in the region and, by extension, on the RCSP water treatment plants.
- The levels of pollution in Darién rivers require greater use of chemicals during the treatment process, which is not sustainable in the long term.
- Delays in the procurement process and with suppliers, due to the COVID-19 context, impacted the delivery of hygiene kits in the field. The last kits were delivered the first week of October 2021.
- Limited transport options to arrange the transfer of hygiene kits from the main storage area to the ERMs for distribution.
- Limited local volunteer capacity to lead hygiene promotion activities.

Lessons Learned

- To include beneficiaries in the process of needs assessment.
- Consider women and children when building sanitation facilities and areas.
- Have a clear idea of the geography and the locations of water treatment stations and facilities.
- To assess the real needs of migrants and communities before building and distributing.
- Administrative processes need to be clearer for the execution of funds in a timely fashion.
- Improved communication and logistics chain awareness, knowing when comes where and why.
- Understanding budget timelines and dates for execution.



Protection Gender and Inclusion

People reached: 2,375

Male: 1,415

Female: 929

N/S: 31

PGI Outcome 5: Communities become more peaceful, safe, and inclusive through meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable

Indicators:	Target	Actual
PGI Minimum Standards for Emergency Situations implemented	1	1

PGI Output 5.1: 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 staff and volunteers (disaggregated by gender and age) receiving training in PGI Minimum Standards	100	108

PGI Output 5.2: Programmer and operations prevent and respond to sexual-and gender-based violence and other forms of violence, especially against children

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached (disaggregated by gender and age) in protection services (key protection messages, information on referral systems)	0	1,326
# of people who received the transit kits	11,000	2,375

Narrative description of achievements

The RCSP PGI Officer deployed sustained efforts to ensure PGI Minimum Standards are implemented in all response areas. Through close collaboration with sector leads to enhance existing services and by directly supporting beneficiaries in the field, the PGI Officer contributed to the development of new reflexes and prioritization processes within the RCSP team. Active referral paths, as well as the processes required to mobilize them, were socialized.

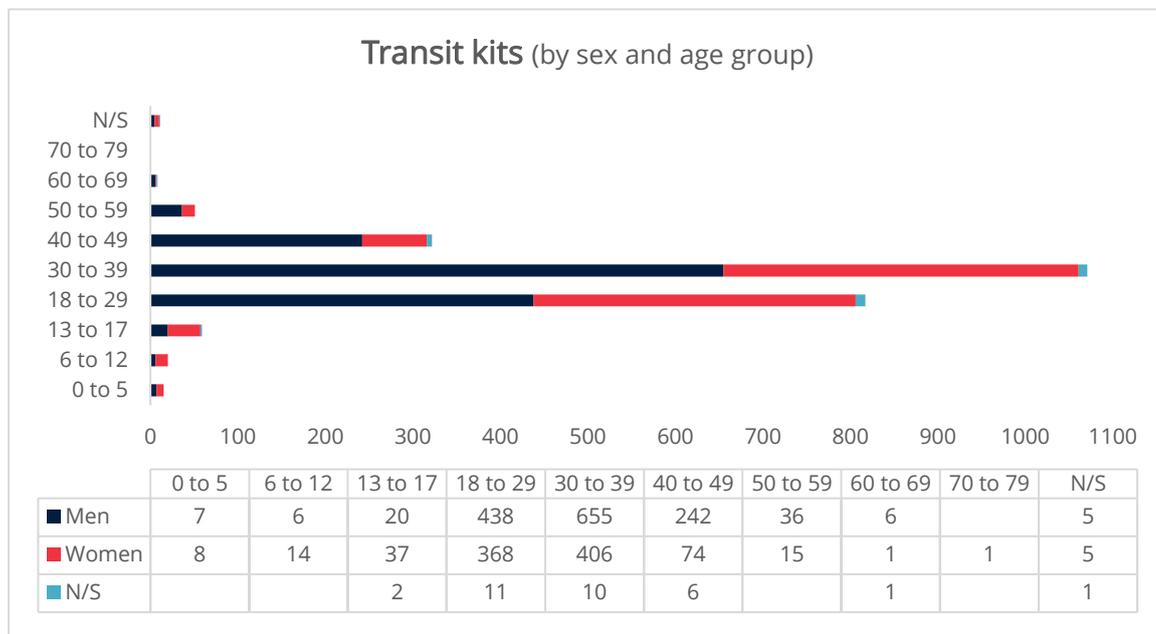
The PGI Officer also organized training on PGI Minimum Standards for volunteers and staff before the start of their activities and refresher briefings for staff already in the field. In both types of sessions, the complex protection issues specific to the Darién response are explored in more detail to ensure RCSP personnel were equipped to face challenging situations and feel empowered to request support as and when needed.

Due to unforeseen delays in the procurement process, distributions of transit kits only began in the third week of October. The kits were well received by families and individuals, who were observed making good use of the items immediately following distribution. The target number of people reached with transit kits was not reached, because due to the change of context, priority was given to the delivery of individual hygiene kits with blankets, since in the months of December and January, the flow of people decreased. Many of the people spent the night at the San Vicente ERM and needed a more complete kit than the transit kit.



Interinstitutional coordination meeting, Meteti, Darien. November 2021. Source: RCSP

With these funds, the RCSP acquired the printouts with key messages that were part of the transit kits, as well as banners, stickers, and visibility items for volunteers, such as t-shirts and training vests.



Challenges

- Protection risks remain high in ERMs, where adequate lighting and security measures are lacking for migrating populations.
- Observed trends in reported protection cases speak to an overall increase in sexual violence.
- Limited capacity, through a single dedicated staff member, to address all PGI-related priorities.

- Strengthen coordination mechanisms with other actors to ensure referral paths are regularly reviewed and revitalized in the case of inactive ones.

Lessons Learned

The process of setting up the referral routes for cases and situations of the migrant population requires a great deal of effort and dedication since we are not only facing a migratory emergency but also that we are facing a low level of commitment and responsibility of the great majority of the actors, who express their disinterest by not taking measures or carrying out actions corresponding to their institutional role.

Fluid communication within the team and planning involving the entire team in the field would allow a comprehensive response to be provided since the team in the field is an essential source of information on the current context and on the population with which it is affected. which we work and our actions are directed

Planning has become a challenge for the field team since the context offers it, as well as certain external agents that carry out missions within the project and commit time and resources; and/or alter the schedule to respond to their specific missions or obtain certain products. In that sense, it is necessary to effectively coordinate these activities at all levels.

During the development of field activities, it has been learned that there is always room for improvement, each activity or process that is developed is subject to constant improvement, therefore, it is important to periodically carry out a self-analysis and self-criticism to know where to improve services.

- Improved communications with the Darien Operation and the RCSP headquarter offices.
- More messaging campaigns to be able to assist more affected persons.
- Programmed times of operations working with Doctors Without Borders (MSF).
- Increased interagency coordination regarding protection messages and support.
- Awareness of the DREF budget for PGI, no one knew how much until the last minute to spend funds.
- More focus groups with maps and brochures of services to migrants.



Migration

People reached: 4,476

Male: 3,365

Female: 1,111

Migration Outcome 6: Communities support the needs of migrants and their families and those assisting migrants at all stages of migration (origin, transit and destination).

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with RFL services	4,000	4,476

Migration Output 6.1: Family links are restored for people separated from, or without news of, their loved ones as a result of the disaster.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of resolved cases of RFL (telephone calls, family reunification, search for missing persons)	4,000	3,964
# of campaigns to promote RFL services implemented.	3	3

Narrative description of achievements

In this response, 18 volunteers from the RCSP contributed to the provision of RFL services. These are mostly oriented towards access to connectivity: the goal is to allow migrating populations to communicate directly with family and friends abroad.

RFL services are well received among the target population, who often lack the financial resources to access connectivity by their own means. Access to free phone calls, for example, allows families and individuals to dedicate a larger part of their savings to arranging transportation to the Costa Rican border, which ultimately shortens their stay in the Darién ERMs. In the San Vicente ERM, RFL services are also complemented by a cell phone charger station, provided by the IOM.

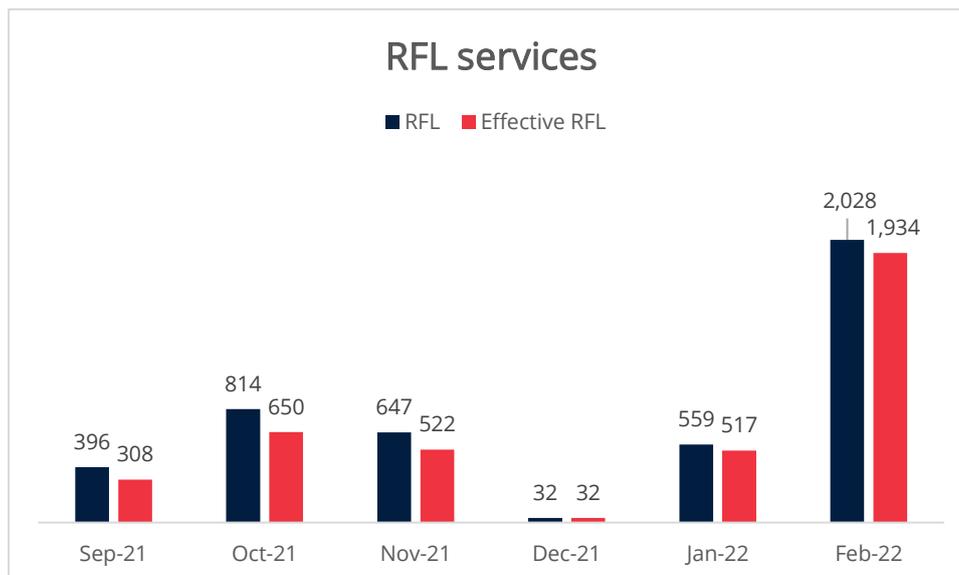
It has been crucial for the RCSP to actively promote RFL services in the ERMs, emphasizing that it is offered free of charge. Along the migration route, people are used to all services being provided at a (sometimes steep) cost; for some, the idea that phone calls could be free was initially hard to believe.

A total of **4,476 RFL services** were provided during this DREF operation with an 89% of effectiveness (3,964). With these DREF funds, the RCSP was able to purchase tablets, cell phones and calling cards.



Charging station for migrant's cell phones, ERM San Vicente.

	RFL services			Effective RFL services		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Sep-21	289	107	396	225	83	308
Oct-21	562	252	814	440	210	650
Nov-21	422	225	647	347	175	522
Dec-21	12	20	32	12	20	32
Jan-22	451	108	559	415	102	517
Feb-22	1,629	399	2,028	1,556	378	1,934
Totals	3,365	1,111	4,476	2,995	968	3,963



Challenges

- Deploy RFL services daily in all ERMs. The RFL services provided by the RCSP in the ERMs are scheduled on a weekly basis, with a maximum of two days of services per ERM, due to the number of RFL kits and trained

volunteers available. The challenge is to be able to provide services in all ERMs simultaneously, which represents an increase in funds and resources to be used, both in terms of trained personnel (volunteers) and RFL equipment (cell phones, speakers, headphones).

- Deploy RFL services in the Bajo Chiquito ERM, due to its very weak reception signal.

Lessons Learned

- Logistics and planning are very important for RFL service. A strong lesson learned in the RFL services relating to internet services and calling were identified. Having the appropriate technology and power generation is important and essential to this operation at the ERM areas. The RFL team had issues with using the wireless routers because there was no IT support to assist in changing network password. In addition, lack of technical support to assist in maintain the generator was an issue relating to closing down the services of internet and charging phones. A schedule maintain of the generator was planned and an easier and more simple router system was used to better assist the RFL team obtain increased number of migrants using the services.
- Another lesson learned was to have closer volunteers and staff to the Migrant Reception Station, the RFL team was lived in communities further away from the ERMs making it a shorter time working in the ERMs.
- Presence demonstrates assistance. Spend more time in the so that migrants can take full advantage of the RFL services throughout the day. Presence also means signage of activities have more messaging for services relating to Red Cross. More RCSP presence in the ERMs and the affected communities of where migrants arrive will also enable the RCSP to maintain a constant positive image in the area.

Strategies for Implementation

Strengthen National Society

SFI 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
# of RCSP volunteers supporting the operation.	27	42

SFI Output S1.1.1: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers that receive PPE and visibility for activities	50	42
# of volunteers receiving advocacy briefings	30	42

Output S1.1.2: National Societies have the necessary corporate infrastructure and systems in place.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of staff hired for the operation	3	2
# of lessons learned workshop held	2	2

SFI S1.2: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured.

S1.2.1: Effective and respected surge capacity mechanism is maintained.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers and staff trained in DREF processes	50	57
# IFRC monitoring visits	3	2

Narrative description of achievements

In September 2021, the RCSP organized a two-part lessons learned workshop with support from a designated facilitator. The first workshop was attended by 15 field personnel; the second one, held in the RCSP headquarters, brought together 14 members of the national management team. Both workshops allowed the RCSP to monitor

progress against the response implementation strategy while also creating constructive exchanges within the teams. A final lessons learned workshop was held on February 2022 in Meteti, Darien, with the support of IFRC and the participation of RCSP 18 staff and volunteers.

For this operation, the RCSP hired a field coordinator and a financial officer.

The IFRC carried out 2 monitoring visits with participation of the Country Cluster Delegation for Central America (Coordinator, Migration, Protection and Social Inclusion and PMER Officer) and of the Americas Regional Office (Coordinator, Migration, Social Inclusion / Head of Disaster Crisis Prevention Risk Reduction / Logistics RIT and Delegates).



Lessons learned workshop, Meteti, Darien. February 2022. Source: RCSP

In September 2021 a Training in Distributions was carried out by the IFRC Field Delegate, with the objective of training the National Society's team in the field for effective distributions in a migratory context. This training complemented the ODK and RC2 training in fieldwork and with the focus on humanitarian assistance provided in the field, with lessons learned in distributions, recommendations, advantages and disadvantages in fieldwork.



Training in distributions, Meteti, Darien. September 2021. Source: RCSP

Volunteers also received PPE and visibility items such as t-shirts and training vests.

, Challenges

- The National Society began the work of adjusting its internal mechanisms to ensure more agile implementation of funds.
- Gaps between response needs identified in the field and their link to headquarters financial processes have been reviewed and prioritized.

- Establish and disseminate practical, user-friendly reporting tools for field teams and monitoring plans for leads to ensure the latest data inform decision-making.
- Clarify procurement processes and train personnel to use them adequately.

Lessons Learned

- A major lesson learned was the number of field coordinators that assisted the operation and the RCSP during the months of September 2021 thru February 2022. Five field coordinators were deployed to the Darien to support the RCSP for a five-month period. Unfortunately, though needed, the need for overlap and fewer field coordinators deploying in longer two to three months periods would have provided more consistent support to the RCSP to carry out the operation.
- In addition, the following points of lessons learned were agreed upon by the RCSP Darien staff and volunteers from the Lessons Learned workshop conducted in February 2022.
- More organised financial management.
- Priority of field projects.
- Established journal reporting.
- Implemented backup dates for activities.
- More hands-on workshops to better inform the RCSP of the opportunities in DREF implementation.

D. Financial Report

See Annex Here.

Contact information

Reference documents

Click here for:

- [DREF Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)
- [Operation Update no. 1](#)

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in 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.