



# EMERGENCY APPEAL

## COUNTRY OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Panama | Central America & Mexico

Migration Crisis



Red Cross Society of Panama's Humanitarian Service Point in Las Lajas Migration Reception Station, July 2022.

Source: RCPS

Appeal No: <b>MDR43008</b>	To be assisted: <b>53,000 people</b>	Appeal launched: <b>29 July 2022</b>
	DREF allocated: <b>CHF 75,000</b>	Disaster Categorisation: <b>Orange</b>
Operation Start date: <b>29 July 2022</b>	Operation End date: <b>31 July 2023</b>	Date of issue: <b>2 September 2022</b>

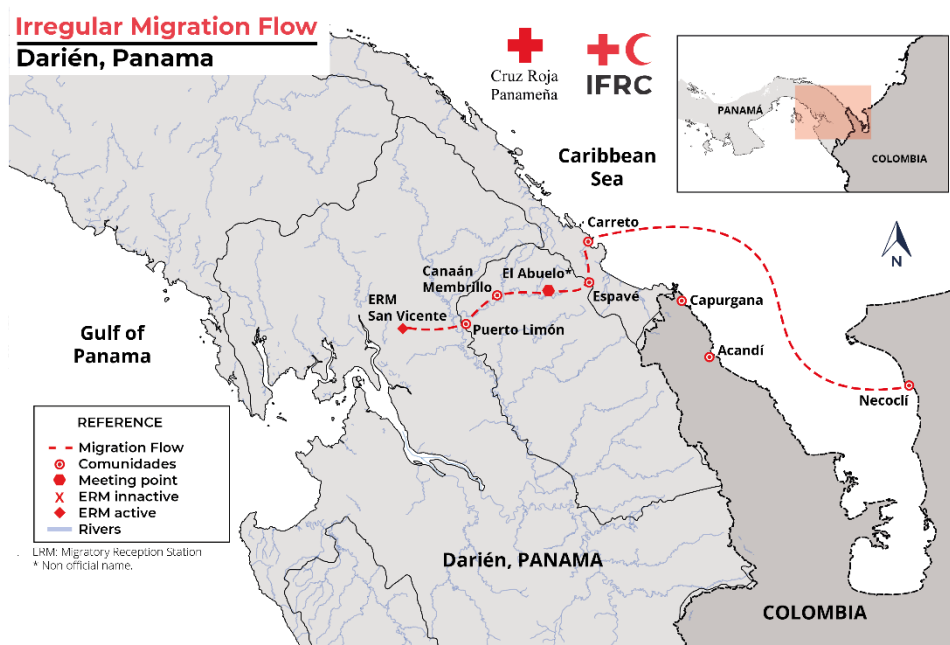
**Panama Funding requirement: CHF 3.4 million**  
**IFRC Secretariat Funding requirement: CHF 18 million**  
**Federation-wide funding requirement: CHF 28 million**

## TIMELINE

- January - May 2021:** 32,797 people crossed the dangerous Darien jungle route, bordering Colombia, twice the number from the same period in 2021 (15,949 people).
- Since 11 July 2022,** no buses have transported migrants to the border with Costa Rica due to prior clashes with protesters while transporting the migrant population. Due to the closure of the Pan-American highway, the Migration Reception Station of San Vicente in Darien Province has sheltered more than 900 people on the move, exceeding its capacity by more than 300%.
- July 23, 2022:** UNICEF reported that 7,282 migrant children and adolescents entered Panama through the border with Colombia from January to June 2022, up from 4,366 from the same period in 2021.
- 29 July 2022:** Seven National Societies decided to scale-up their response, and together with the IFRC, **launch an Emergency Appeal** to support the **National Societies of Central America and Mexico** for **CHF 18 million** to **assist 210,000 people** for **12 months**. CHF 1 million was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) to kick-off the operation.
- Aug 2021:** IFRC Secretary General visits the Darien Gap.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

### Severity of humanitarian conditions

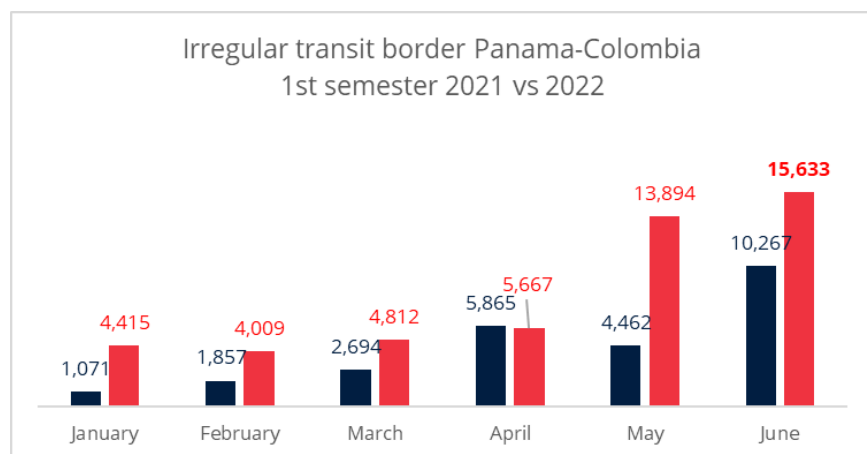


In Panama, transit routes tend to be dynamic and in a highly changing context. The month of June marked the peak of migratory flows in 2022 that have irregularly entered Panama through the Darien Gap (bordering Colombia), at a total of 15,633 people, of which 2,254 (14%) were children and adolescents. As of June 30, 2022, 48,430 migrants<sup>1</sup> had entered through the Darien so far this year compared to the 26,216 registered persons during the year-earlier period, reflecting an increase of 85%. As in 2021, the

trend of transiting through the national territory with the aim of following the migratory route to the north of the continent continues; in this regard, to date, only eight people have submitted applications for recognition of

<sup>1</sup> Venezuelans continue to represent the main nationality present in the flows, at 58%, followed by people from Haiti (10%; including the children of Haitians, whose birth records correspond to Chile and Brazil) and Cuba (5%), in addition to 50 other nationalities, including transcontinental migrants.

refugee status in the country. In addition to the increase in migrants reported between January and June 2022, since June 27, 2022, a series of protests by various sectors throughout the country have been escalating, leading to temporary closures, limiting access to the North and South vehicular corridors, as well as the Panama-La Chorrera and Panama-Colón highways, due to increases in the price of food, fuel, and medicines, among others. After many weeks of negotiations between the authorities and protesters, a humanitarian corridor was established on July 16, allowing the transfer of 4,268 migrants to the border with Costa Rica.<sup>2</sup>



Source: <https://www.migracion.gob.pa/inicio/estadisticas>

### 1. Impact on accessibility, availability, quality, use and knowledge of goods and services

The current situation - including new routes of entry, delays in transfers to Chiriquí and the departure on foot of migrants from the community of Canaán Membrillo and the San Vicente and Lajas Blancas Migratory Reception Stations (ERM by its Spanish acronym) - has made it difficult for the field team to reach migrants in the Darién region. The road blockade has hindered access to fuel for the maintenance of water treatment plants as well as for the transportation of goods and services to meet the basic needs of the migrant and host population.

### 2. Impact on physical and mental well-being

The facilities at San Vicente ERM are unable to meet the current needs due to ongoing refurbishment work,<sup>3</sup> and the increase in the number of migrants in transit exceeds the local response capacity. The current conditions of migrants have increased levels of tension, anxiety, and stress, which led to the activation of a Code Blue at the ERM on July 13, 2022, requiring all humanitarian actors on the ground to suspend care and evacuate.

### 3. Risks and vulnerabilities

Since the last week of June, massive protests<sup>4</sup> have been taking place nationwide in Panama as a result of citizen dissatisfaction with the high cost of the basic food basket, medicines, and fuel. Due to the protests, there have been road blockades (on the Inter-American and Pan-American highways), that paralysed cargo and passenger transportation, resulting in a generalised shortage of food and basic supplies.<sup>5</sup> The road closures have also posed a challenge for the continued operation of the controlled migratory flow through the national territory, as on several occasions buses with migrants leaving Darien for Chiriquí (the border region with Costa Rica) were stranded on route. As a result of the road closures, on the night of July 11, several buses with migrants moving towards the ERM of Los Planes de Gualaca (Chiriqui) were stopped and vandalised while trying to follow the route defined within the controlled migratory flow. Although the authorities were able to negotiate the safe passage of buses and the movement of migrants from the San Vicente ERM (Darien) to Chiriqui, the caravans of

<sup>2</sup> [UN NEWS, nearly 50,000 migrants arrived in Panama through the Darien jungle so far in 2022.](#)

<sup>3</sup> The maximum capacity of the San Vicente ERM currently is 250 people; under normal conditions it is about 400 people.

<sup>4</sup> [What sparked the largest protests in Panama in years? - LA Times, 19 July 2022.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Protests in Panama result in shortages and power cuts - The San Diego Union Tribune, 20 July, 2022.](#)

July 19 and 20 have been stranded on the route (53 buses with more than 2,500 people). Under current conditions, interprovincial point-to-point transit can take up to 48 hours.<sup>6</sup>

- The disruption of supply chains due to road closures has had a direct impact on access to the supplies needed to promote hygiene (soaps, kits, etc.), as well as basic medical supplies.
- Changes in the dynamics of the host communities have generated a lag/delay in previously agreed activities.
- The increase in migratory flows, added to the long stay of migrants in the ERMs, has generated a greater demand for attention; this is causing exhaustion in the teams and volunteers.
- Road closures have prevented the incorporation of all teams in the field, resulting in a decrease in key personnel.
- The usual procurement and purchasing processes, including delivery times from suppliers, are causing delays in the immediate response.
- The increase of migrants “in transit” who are affected by the road closures creates another context of need on the route which was not contemplated in the scenarios.

### **Situation in Darien**

The facilities at San Vicente ERM continue to operate below capacity due to ongoing conditioning work. The current conditions of the migrants have caused increased levels of tension, anxiety, and stress, which led to the activation of a Code Blue at the ERM on July 13, so that all humanitarian actors present in the field had to suspend care and evacuate. This is the fourth instance of Code Blue being declared so far in 2022, while no such security incident had been recorded last year.

In response to the overcrowding in the San Vicente ERM and the community of Canaán Membrillo, as well as food shortages and the lack and/or delay in mobilisation to Chiriquí, the authorities temporarily reopened the Lajas Blancas ERM<sup>7</sup> to attend to migratory flows as of July 14.

Finally, a new canoe route was identified through the community of Zapallal (on the Pan-American Highway); it is estimated that this route is used daily by groups of up to 30 migrants, who are staying in the community's Catholic church.

The current situation - including new routes of entry, delays in transfers to Chiriqui and the departure on foot of migrants from the community of Canaan Membrillo and the ERM San Vicente and Lajas Blancas - has made it difficult for the field team to count migrants in the Darien region. The National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym) manages the official statistics; in addition, humanitarian actors in the field collect data through their operational teams.

## **CAPACITIES AND RESPONSE**

### **1. National Society response capacity**

#### **1.1 National Society capacity and ongoing response**

The Red Cross Society of Panama (RCSP), through a permanent team of 40 people directly in the field at the Darien Gap and more than 150 volunteers, continues to provide its usual services to migrants in the sectors of WASH; Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI); Restoring Family Links (RCF); and Health.

- **Health** - basic first aid, healing, maternal and infant care, nutritional screening, etc.

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<sup>6</sup> Transit time under regular conditions averages 12 hours.

<sup>7</sup> The maximum capacity of the Lajas Blancas ERM is 400 people.

- **PGI** - psychological first aid, delivery of self-care messages, and RFL services.
- **WASH** - cleaning days, fumigation to mitigate vectors, hygiene promotion (with migrants and host communities), drinking water production, installation of fire extinguishers and insect screens in housing units (RHU).
- **Risk Management** - with the implementation of the Pilot Programmatic Partnership (PPP), risk management actions have expanded to include the analysis of vulnerabilities, action plans to mitigate risk, etc.
- **CEA** - with the direct work of sensitisation and accountability to the community while generating strategies to strengthen livelihoods.

Since July 11, 2022, the National Society has been also responding to the civil unrest that has affected migrants through the DREF operation [MDRPA016](#). This DREF operation is focusing on Emergency Health, including MHPSS, WASH and PGI.

Due to its international mandate and expertise, the UN General Secretariat has designated the Red Cross Society of Panama to coordinate the operational response for refugees and migrants in the country. This coordination enhances strategic and operational planning allowing the National Society and other organisations to carry out their respective mandates. With IFRC support, the National Society is mapping different organisations' actions and having a comprehensive approach for the complimentary implementation of activities and services.

- **Security**

Migrants face a high travel risk crossing the Darien Gap but low travel risks in the rest of the Isthmus. However, crime rates have risen, particularly in Colón and the capital Panama City, where both petty and violent crime present significant risks. Muggings and thefts from vehicles are common, and foreign visitors, such as humanitarian workers, can be targeted because of their perceived wealth. While Panama continues to maintain lower crime rates than other Central American countries, recent Panamanian National Police statistics show an increase in homicides, reported assaults, and sexual assaults. RCRC personnel are advised against walking around urban areas alone at night. Additionally, personnel working or visiting the town of Colón are advised not to walk alone at any time and to visit the city only during the day. The Darien region is an area with an increased risk of kidnapping and violent crime by illegal Colombian armed groups and drug-trafficking groups. As part of the ECHO Pilot Programmatic Partnership (ECHO PPP) Pillar 3 – People on the Move, Panama Red Cross with the technical support of IFRC will scale up services in Gualaca (Chiriqui province in the Northern border with Costa Rica) through a new HSP; also, Panama RC through ECHO PPP provides health and PSS, RFL services and relief (hygiene kits, dignity kits, blankets) to regular migrant flows entering the Darien gap; through this EA, ECHO PPP actions will be complemented and scaled up to respond to increased migrant flows.

## 1.2 Capacity and response at national level

The Panamanian government has institutions providing basic services in the Darien Gap:

- Ministry of Health:
  - Yaviza Hospital
  - Centro De Atención Primaria De Salud Innovadora (Innovative Primary Healthcare Centre) in Santa Fe
  - Metetí Maternity and Child Centre
  - Primary Health Post in La Peñita
  - Primary Health Post in Canaán Membrillo
  - The first three centres have been equipped with primary care equipment for COVID-19 patients. They also provide care for other morbidities and medical emergencies.

- National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC by its Spanish acronym): work coordinated at the national level through the risk management area.
- National Border Service (SENAFRONT by its Spanish acronym): responsible for security in the region, they have a battalion in Metetí. And operational bases at strategic points in the area. They coordinate the operation of the ERM La Peñita and the shelter in Lajas Blancas.
- National Migration Service (SNM by its Spanish acronym): Receives migrants in coordination with SENAFRONT, checks documentation, performs identification, verifies their background and coordinates for them to cross the country.
- National Secretariat for Children and Adolescent Families (SENIAF by its Spanish acronym): lead agency for child protection, provides lodging in Panama City for unaccompanied children, and has a focal point in the community to handle cases.
- The Ombudsman's Office of Panama is the national institution in charge of promoting, protecting, and defending human rights.
- The National Society maintains and collaborates in coordination meetings to develop activities with different actors.

## 2. International capacity and response

### 2.1 Red Cross Red Crescent Movement capacity and response

#### *IFRC membership*

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has a presence in Panama through its Regional Office for the Americas; as well as through the Central America Country Cluster Delegation (CCD) team with technical staff that provides support to the Panama RC in the implementation of its Migration Programme, the Pilot Programmatic Partnership, and COVID-19, among others. The cluster team is composed of a Project Manager, Relief Delegate in Darien, finance staff, PMER in emergencies, Membership Services Coordinator (also liaison for strategic matters), as well as staff from technical and support areas of the Regional Office (Disasters, climate and crisis, Health, WASH, and CEA, among others). Also in Panama is the IFRC's Humanitarian Logistics Centre (Hub) for the Americas and the Caribbean, which has the capacity to pre-position humanitarian aid quickly and efficiently and offers services to National Societies in supply chain coordination, procurement management, warehousing, and logistics development.

During the COVID-19 emergency, funds were channelled from the Global Appeal that contributed to the strengthening of the central Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), alternate EOCs, training of volunteers and staff in CEA and implementation of feedback mechanisms with the communities, support to the national vaccination campaign PANA-VAC-19, and WASH in educational centres, among others. Similarly, the RCSP has received support from the IFRC in the response to other emergencies such as the DREF to hurricanes ETA and IOTA (2020), floods in Bocas del Toro (2021), and population movement (2021).

Since 2018 (with the opening of the regional population movement appeal), while the IFRC has been working in coordination with the RCSP in the field, the Secretariat has provided strategic technical and operational support to the National Society in the development of the strategic framework for work on migration from the construction of a migration policy, and a working strategy that shapes the focus areas for the RCSP through its medium - long term programme. The IFRC has specialised technical staff (in the field/Relief delegate) as well as staff from the CCD who coordinate with the RCSP and work hand in hand to strengthen its capacities.

The National Society, through the General Director, maintains constant communication with the Movement's partners present in the country, the Participating National Societies (PNS). The American Red Cross has a bilateral conversation to support the RCSP in organisational development while the Canadian Red Cross has collaborated

bilaterally with the Panamanian Red Cross in health themes linked to COVID-19. Both National Societies are present in Panama through their regional delegations.

### ICRC

During the development of actions in the Darien area, the ICRC has been a key partner in the advocacy processes with national authorities and the strengthening of the local committee and different brigades through the following actions:

- For more than 10 years in the area, the ICRC has promoted International Humanitarian Law training to the different authorities in the area, mainly with SENAFRONT.
- Within the different strengthening activities, a special section has been assigned to the province of Darien, promoting the training, integration and strengthening of local volunteers in topics such as RFL, PGI, and Safer Access, among others, which have allowed their participation in the activities developed within the framework of the appeal.
- During the COVID-19 emergency, resources have been made available to the National Society to enable the acquisition of PPE, some instruments and tools that allow the Real Branch and the different brigades to join forces with the local authorities in the epidemiological fences in a safe and professional manner.
- Technical support in the areas of Migration, Protection, Operational Communication, among others.

## 2.2 International Humanitarian Stakeholder capacity and response

The national authorities present in the San Vicente and Lajas Blancas EMRs maintain close two-way communication with the RCSP's team in the field, which allows for effective coordination for the implementation of activities of care and assistance to the migrant population. Likewise, the RCSP continues to work in a coordinated manner in the field, maintaining fluid inter-agency communications through different channels, including spaces for the updating and socialisation of current conditions, security recommendations and identification of gaps, risks or challenges. In this regard, the Human Mobility Group (HMG) in the field is assessing the need for a formal request for the opening of a humanitarian corridor to allow the safe movement of migrants from Darien to Chiriqui, as well as the supply of products and supplies to cover basic needs, such as access to food, drinking water, health services, etc.

The humanitarian actors in the field - RCSP, RET International, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), HIAS, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), UNICEF, Global Brigades - maintain a "mirror" strategy of attention in both ERMs (San Vicente and Lajas Blancas). This operational strategy allows the different teams to provide assistance in parallel in both stations, offering the same services.

The RCSP, in its role as auxiliary to the public authorities, maintains a close relationship at the coordination level with state authorities. However, specifically in Darien, given the migratory context in the area, the coordination mechanisms are direct with the different governmental and non-governmental actors.

Since July 2019 to date, several work meetings have been held both in Darien, Chiriqui and Panama City with agencies such as: SNM, the Ministry of Health (MINSAL by its Spanish acronym), SENAFRONT, Ombudsman's Office, Mayor of Pinogana, SENNIAF, and the Office of the First Lady, among others, however, in terms of the migration situation in the area, it can be noted that:

- The government - through SENAFRONT, the SNM, and MINSAL, among others, has provided the migrant population with food, medical services, security and transportation. The RCSP, together with the IFRC, have provided technical support in the development of better strategies, but also in constant advocacy and training processes for the staff of these two organisations.

- MINSA has strengthened its healthcare services in the community of Canaán Membrillo. Additionally, during the previous call, the infrastructure conditions at the Canglón Health Centre were improved, together with the refurbishment of the Metetí Maternity Home.
- Thanks to the support of UNHCR, medicines worth US\$30,000 were provided to MINSA, mainly for the care of the migrant population and host communities.
- UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, and the Norwegian Refugee Council are present in the region, mainly promoting protection actions and complementing the actions of the government and other actors. Working meetings are held with them in an inter-agency coordination table that was initially convened and led by the RCSP, but is currently carried out by IOM, where different topics have been addressed such as: Migrant children, attention to extracontinental migrants, humanitarian logistics, national migration strategy, disaster response, migration and human rights, and COVID-19 and migratory reality, among other equally important topics.
- SENAFRONT, MINSA, and SNM have a permanent presence in the Bajo Chiquito community. In Lajas Blancas, they limit themselves to carrying out their activities systematically and without coordination in the field. SENAFRONT is willing to find or create synergies in the coordination of activities, however, the response of MINSA and SNM has been limited to bilateral coordination which no longer manages to provide adequate responses to the new context.
- The RCPS has served as a liaison so that MSF and MINSA can work together in the town of Bajo Chiquito and from there, provide adequate initial medical care. The RCSP, thanks to other partners, has provided MSF with medicines to carry out this care.
- Together with the Gorgas Memorial Institute, the RCSP conducted a health survey of the migrant population in January 2022 to measure the health status (tropical and infectious infections, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and nutrition) and the basic health needs of migrants in transit through Panama.

### 3. Gaps in the response<sup>8</sup>

In the current national context, the significant increase in irregular migration flows through the Darien Gap has exacerbated vulnerabilities and risks for both migrants and host and transit communities. Road blockades and constant protests have caused shortages at the national level, limiting access to basic needs and services such as food, drinking water, fuel and health, among others. The following needs have been identified at ERMs and host communities:

- Food and drinking water: Access to safe water at all migrant reception stations and host populations has been at the heart of health-related problems. Sanitation is also essential at access points for safe water and hygiene. Most people have consumed unsafe water on their journeys and arrive with water-related health problems.
- Healthcare and medical supplies: The demand for healthcare could drastically increase due to the large number of migrants arriving daily. The extreme conditions of the migratory flows through the jungle have generated massive attention of people's health problems such as dehydration, malnutrition, arterial hypertension, injuries and wounds in extremities, respiratory problems, gastrointestinal infections, dermatological diseases, and reproductive health services.

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<sup>8</sup> The RCSP has a programme that responds to these needs, with staff and volunteers who are dedicated to working with migrants in transit as well as in host communities. However, with the increase in flows and the changing dynamics, compounded by other crisis factors such as social unrest in the country, it is necessary to strengthen relief services to provide a response that reaches more people with a focus on humanitarian and protection response. Vulnerabilities have been exacerbated both for migrants and for host and transit communities.



- Latrines, handwashing, and safe water supply: Host communities do not have sufficient infrastructure. There are not enough latrines or showers, and this creates spaces that quickly become contaminated.
- Hygiene and cleaning supplies. Due to the large number of migrants arriving daily, it is necessary to continue the cleaning of ERMs.
- Dignified lodging spaces (Canaán Membrillo, San Vicente): People who do not have cash to continue their journey to the Costa Rican border must wait between one to three days until their relatives send them money to be able to continue the trip. Under the current conditions, in order to receive services, people must wait outdoors under the harshness of Panama's tropical climate, such as the strong sun, humidity or rain. In many cases, services cannot be provided to certain population groups.
- Strengthening of the solid waste management system: Due to difficult access, waste management services are not frequent, so garbage accumulates in public spaces, presenting various risks for migrants and members of host communities.
- Livelihoods for host communities: The livelihoods of host communities are affected given the rapid increase and flows of migrants in the area.

## OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Communications	Road access	Operational constraints
<p>The generalised restriction in each of the areas is the language barrier, since migrants come from different nationalities, most of whom speak Spanish, English, French, Creole and Portuguese, among other languages.</p> <p>Canaán Membrillo does not have an adequate and permanent telephone signal, nor does it have public internet service.</p>	<p>During the winter season, torrential rains begin to fall, resulting in the deterioration and partial or total closure of roads to host communities, which complicates and limits supply chains and access for operational personnel.</p> <p>Access to some host communities (Canaán Membrillo) is only by river, which requires specialised and necessary interventions to make the most of the resources.</p> <p>Massive protests have been taking place nationwide in Panama and there have been road blockades (on the Inter-American and Pan-American highways), which paralysed cargo and passenger transportation for almost three weeks, resulting in a generalised shortage of food and basic supplies.</p>	<p>There are only a couple of stores that supply the area with food products, spare parts, tools, and equipment (in Darien).</p> <p>Repair shops for machinery and equipment are in the same situation, complicating the regular maintenance of water purification systems.</p> <p>The high number of people housed in the San Vicente ERM exceeds the capacity of the health services currently operating.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 infections, a large number of SENAFRONT personnel were moved to confinement, as well as others institutional needs, thus reducing the number of personnel guarding the facilities and areas in Darien.</p> <p>The community of La Peñita does not have a permanently assigned vehicle, which limits the transfer of sick people requiring urgent medical attention to the reference medical centre, which is a 30-minute drive away.</p>

The RCSP has adopted several measures to mitigate the operational limitations described above. In relation to the language barrier, key messages were generated in different languages, such as English, French, and Creole, in addition to Spanish. The National Society incorporated icons and pictographs to convey messages on the signs, is taking steps to activate a satellite phone to be used in the community of Canaan Membrillo, and equipped the personnel with communication radios as a security measure.

Road travel is impossible during the rainy season, so travel is done by "piraguas" (dugout canoes). An option being explored is setting up rest points to spend the night in Canaan Membrillo, as long as the number of migrants does not exceed the limits established as safe. In this way, daily transfers to the site are avoided.

## FEDERATION-WIDE APPROACH

The Emergency Appeal is part of a **Federation-wide approach**, based on the response priorities of the Operating National Society and in consultation with all Federation members contributing to the response. The approach, reflected in this Operational Strategy, will ensure linkages between all response activities (including bilateral activities and activities funded domestically) and will assist in leveraging the capacities of all members of the IFRC network in the country, to maximise the collective humanitarian impact.

The Federation-wide funding requirement for this Emergency Appeal comprises all support and funding to be channelled to the Operating National Society in the response to the emergency event. This includes the operating National Society's domestic fundraising ask, the fundraising ask of supporting Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, and the funding ask of the IFRC secretariat.

## **OPERATIONAL STRATEGY**

### **Vision**

As part of the Mexico and Central American Migration Crisis Emergency Appeal, the aim is to address the vulnerabilities of 53,000 migrants in transit through humanitarian and protection assistance delivered mainly at humanitarian service points located along the route.

In essence, the National Society will scale-up the establishment and operation of HSPs, which have contributed to saving lives and reducing suffering along migratory routes in the past.

The implementation of the Country Plan will be under the Regional Operational Strategy framework, in parallel with the ongoing activities at the local level following the localisation agenda. IFRC will ensure a coordinated approach of all Membership components to National Societies' development initiatives aiming for sustainable development and growth of each organisation. Operations will consider the long-term impact on National Societies with a holistic approach and will look beyond the term of the operational strategy to long-term sustainability. They will also link with current programmes based on existing strategic frameworks, such as the 2030 strategy, the Global Migration Strategy, and the Migration Action Plan in the Americas, reinforcing cross-border work to promote bi-national exchanges of experience.

### **Anticipated climate-related risks and adjustments in the operation**

#### **Weather risk factors:**

- The early arrival of winter brings with it storms. Such storms can develop flash floods in the rivers, which can generate floods in nearby places as happened in December 2019 when some sectors of the ERM of La Peñita were flooded.
- With the rainy season, several roads are either partially or totally closed.
- Increased humidity and temperature rise due to the windchill factor.
- The water becomes more turbid due to the rainy season, which makes it necessary to constantly check the chemicals used for water purification.
- Deterioration of the water treatment plant and equipment due to high water turbidity levels.
- Constant rains and deforestation in some areas with prolonged slopes are at risk of landslides.
- Wind is a factor to consider during this season for the construction of emergency shelters, especially in Planes de Gualaca.
- The proliferation of insects, such as mosquitoes, that can transmit various seasonal diseases.
- With the flooding of rivers, it is very likely that there will be cases of drowning as in 2019. Therefore, it is essential to take into account contingency plans and disaster response in the Bajo Chiquito ERM, which

is very close to a river and where there is no early warning system, as well as safety protocols for the RCSP team that must travel in canoes when going to that ERM.

Measures/adjustments to the strategy: as part of this emergency appeal, evacuation plans will be developed in the Darien and Chiriqui ERMs, as well as the constant monitoring of weather conditions in the intervention zones prior to equipment deployment, and the timely monitoring and maintenance of equipment.

## Targeting

### 1. People to be assisted

This intervention will prioritise the areas in which the National Society is already working, mainly in the Migratory Reception Stations and host communities in the geographical area of Darien and Chiriquí.

According to the data handled by the authorities on migrants in the ERMs and the capacity of the RCSP's deployed personnel, the following average figures are expected to be reached, considering percentages by sex and age:


Sex-age group	Total quantity
Males over 18 years of age	19,020
Male under 18 years old	12,690
Females over 18 years old	12,690
Females under 18 years of age	8,600
<b>Total number of people to be assisted</b>	<b>53,000</b>

### 2. Considerations for protection, gender and inclusion and community engagement and accountability

All actions will be carried out in accordance with the humanitarian mandate of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and the IFRC's Global Migration Strategy. This will also be in accordance with Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), PGI, and the Red Cross Red Crescent approach to programme and operation design, which relies on a series of activities that help communities to be at the centre of what the RCSP does, integrating communication and participation throughout the programme or operation cycle, as well as timely and dignified assistance adapted to the specific needs of the different population groups served.

## PLANNED OPERATIONS



### INTEGRATED ASSISTANCE

 <b>Multi-purpose Cash</b>	Female > 18: <b>68</b>	Female < 18: <b>95</b>	<b>CHF 137,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>126</b>	Male < 18: <b>102</b>	<b>Total target: 391</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<b><i>The most vulnerable and displaced people have their needs addressed through the use of cash.</i></b>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training volunteers in livelihood tools and cash and voucher assistance.</li> <li>2. Conducting a feasibility study of CVA in the host community (Canaan Membrillo).</li> <li>3. Market analysis.</li> </ol>		

4. Definition of the delivery mechanism and agreement with suppliers.
5. Construction, communication and implementation of the CEA Plan for cash transfers and livelihoods which includes:
6. Provision of agricultural inputs and/or conditional CVA for the host community population for enterprise development (seed capital pilot) - linkage with PGI actions with host communities in Canaan Membrillo for 40 families (first pilot).

## HEALTH & CARE INCLUDING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)


### (MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT / COMMUNITY HEALTH)

 <p><b>Health &amp; Care</b> (Mental Health and Psychosocial Support / Community Health / Medical Services)</p>	Female > 18: <b>12,690</b>	Female < 18: <b>8,600</b>	<b>CHF 217,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>19,008</b>	Male < 18: <b>12,690</b>	<b>Total target: 52,800</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<b><i>The most vulnerable and displaced people are provided with high-quality health and care services including MHPSS.</i></b>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<p><b>1. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Creation of an MHPSS network to care for caregivers.</li> <li>b. Hiring of permanent human resources to provide MHPSS within the RCSP (volunteers, staff). Two psychologists (one continuity for 12 months - one to be hired for 12 months), the second hiring is to follow-up actions in the field.</li> <li>c. Implementation of a National Intervention Team training in MHPSS.</li> <li>d. Purchase and distribution of MHPSS Kits for migrants and host communities.</li> <li>e. Implementation of MHPSS care activities with volunteers and staff (two vol x 20 days x 12 months).</li> </ol> <p><b>2. Community Health</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Implementation of the CBHFA methodology in host communities.</li> <li>b. Distribution of 5,000 family first aid kits in host communities.</li> <li>c. Purchase and distribution of 1,000 mosquito nets.</li> <li>d. Health promotion activities.</li> <li>e. Purchase and installation of supplies to ensure hygiene and adequate medical services in the ERM.</li> </ol>		
 <p><b>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</b></p>	Female > 18: <b>12,690</b>	Female < 18: <b>8,600</b>	<b>CHF 666,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>19,008</b>	Male < 18: <b>12,690</b>	<b>Total target: 53,000</b>


<b>Objective:</b>	<b><i>Comprehensive WASH support is provided to the most vulnerable, resulting in an immediate reduction in the risk of water-related diseases and improvement in dignity for the targeted population</i></b>
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<p><b>WATER:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purchase and installation of a portable water purification plant.</li> <li>2. Purchase of fuel for water treatment plants.</li> <li>3. Maintenance and rehabilitation of water treatment plants at headquarters and the purchase of spare parts.</li> <li>4. Maintenance of water systems and chemicals for water purification in the ERM.</li> <li>5. Continuity of a WASH Technician (12 months).</li> <li>6. Distribution of 10,000 portable water filters.</li> </ol> <p><b>SANITATION:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Installation of portable restrooms for field personnel.</li> </ol> <p><b>HYGIENE</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hygiene promotion activities (e.g. ERM cleaning, hygiene promotion campaigns) with host communities.</li> <li>2. Purchase and distribution of 10,000 hygiene kits.</li> <li>3. Hiring and continuity of Community Promoters (4) (one continuity of 12 months - two continuity of nine months) + one in Chiriqui 12 months.</li> <li>4. Distribution of hygiene and cleaning supplies for migrants in the ERM.</li> </ol>


## PROTECTION AND PREVENTION

**(PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION (PGI), COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA), MIGRATION, RISK REDUCTION, CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RECOVERY, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, EDUCATION)**

	<b>Protection, Gender and Inclusion</b>	Female > 18: <b>12,690</b>	Female < 18: <b>8,600</b>	<b>CHF 212,000</b>
		Male > 18: <b>19,008</b>	Male < 18: <b>12,690</b>	<b>Total target: 53,000</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<b><i>The different people impacted, displaced by, or refugees fleeing the crisis are safe from harm including violence, discrimination and exclusion, and their needs and rights are met.</i></b>			
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Setting up of friendly spaces in host communities.</li> <li>2. Making adjustments to the ERM with a focus on PGI.</li> <li>3. Continuity of PGI Officers (2) (one for 12 months and one for nine months).</li> <li>4. Hiring of a RFL officer for 12 months.</li> <li>5. Provide RFL services, including training for volunteers and staff on RFL.</li> <li>6. Purchase of equipment to expand RFL coverage (two BGAN + one SATELITAL + Electric generator + Pelican WL/WF1560</li> </ol>			

suitcase + Cell phones + Wi-Fi + two Trailers for delivery of relief supplies and services with tables and chairs.


 <b>Community Engagement and Accountability</b>	Female > 18: <b>12,690</b>	Female < 18: <b>8,600</b>	<b>CHF 126,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>19,008</b>	Male < 18: <b>12,690</b>	<b>Total target: 53,000</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<i><b>The diverse needs, priorities and preferences of the affected people guide the response through a people-centred approach and meaningful community participation.</b></i>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application of satisfaction surveys to the assisted population.</li> <li>2. Purchase of 10 tablets and five cell phones.</li> <li>3. Implementation of a TOT in CEA.</li> <li>4. Purchase of visibility inputs.</li> <li>5. Continuity of the CEA Officer (five months).</li> </ol>		

 <b>Migration</b>	Female > 18: <b>12,672</b>	Female < 18: <b>8,448</b>	<b>CHF 1,558,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>19,008</b>	Male < 18: <b>12,672</b>	<b>Total target: 52,800</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<i><b>Specific vulnerabilities of people on the move, including migrants, refugees and returnees are analysed and their needs and rights are met with dedicated humanitarian assistance, protection and humanitarian diplomacy interventions, in coordination with relevant stakeholders and sectors.</b></i>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National Intervention Team training on migration.</li> <li>2. Setting up of nine HSPs for Darien.</li> <li>3. Distribution of 10,000 relief kits<sup>9</sup> for Darien and Gualaca.</li> <li>4. Purchase of a canoe (piragua) with an outboard motor for mobilisation of the team.</li> </ol> <p><b>5. Medical Services</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provision of ambulances (Darien and Gualaca).</li> <li>b. Maintenance and purchase of fuel for ambulances.</li> <li>c. Maintain continuity of one Emergency Vehicle Operator (12 months) add three new hires for nine months and two Emergency Unit Technician hires for Darien and Gualaca.</li> <li>d. Hiring of four data entry for nine months.</li> <li>e. Purchase of medical supplies and equipment.</li> <li>f. Implementation of health activities.</li> </ol>		

<sup>9</sup> The National Society uses this term to refer to different kits that are prepared and delivered according to demand and context, for example, transit kits, biosafety kits, dignity kits, etc. It is not a specific fixed content but varies according to the needs.

 <b>Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery</b>	Female > 18: <b>12,672</b>	Female < 18: <b>8,448</b>	<b>CHF 150,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>19,008</b>	Male < 18: <b>12,672</b>	<b>Total target: 52,800</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<b><i>Host communities in high-risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disasters</i></b>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design an Evacuation Plan for the Darien and Chiriqui ERMs.</li> <li>2. Purchase and installation of signs in the ERM.</li> <li>3. Implementation of awareness campaigns on risk reduction issues including the translation of the first aid guide in Embera Wounan.</li> <li>4. Implementation of a warning and risk communication system.</li> <li>5. Formation of first aid brigades and equipment.</li> </ol>		

## Enabling approaches

 <b>National Society Strengthening</b>	Female > 18: <b>600</b>	Female < 18: <b>0</b>	<b>CHF 324,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>900</b>	Male < 18: <b>0</b>	<b>Total target: 1,500</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<b><i>National Societies respond effectively to the wide spectrum of evolving crises and their auxiliary role in disaster risk management is well-defined and recognised.</i></b>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contribution to the Volunteer Solidarity Fund.</li> <li>2. Implementation of a logistics ENI for management personnel and RCSP volunteers.</li> <li>3. Purchases to improve the RCSP's vehicle fleet (two 4x4 WD operational vehicles).</li> <li>4. Maintenance and insurance policies for vehicles.</li> <li>5. Personal protection equipment for volunteers and staff.</li> <li>6. Purchase of visibility inputs and uniforms for volunteers.</li> <li>7. Acquisition of software, supplies and licenses to ensure efficient, effective and secure administrative management.</li> <li>8. Inputs for the strengthening of the structure of the communication systems and information exchange systems; Acquisition of technological resources; Purchase of equipment and communication systems.</li> <li>9. Hiring and continuity of several support positions (Financial Officer - 12 months, PMER, IT Officer, Project Manager Officer, Head of Procurement, Project Liaison, Project Operational Assistant, Human Resources Manager).</li> <li>10. Consultancies for improvements and manuals, HR procedures APX 40K.</li> </ol>		

 <b>Coordination and Partnerships</b>	Female > 18: <b>125</b>	Female < 18: <b>0</b>	<b>CHF 10,000</b>
	Male > 18: <b>125</b>	Male < 18: <b>0</b>	<b>Total target: 250</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	<i><b>Expand the programmatic reach of National Societies and the International Federation to ensure a coordinated humanitarian response with other governmental and non-governmental agencies.</b></i>		
<b>Priority Actions:</b>	<b>1. Membership Coordination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conduct regular coordination meetings with the IFRC, National Society and PNSs.</li> </ul> <b>2. Engagement with external partners</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. High level meetings.</li> <li>b. Meetings with local stakeholders and coordination tables (PMM - Darien and Chiriqui).</li> <li>c. Scenario analysis on Darien and Chiriqui.</li> </ul> <b>3. Movement Cooperation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conduct regular tripartite meetings (ICRC, IFRC, National Society).</li> </ul>		

## Risk management

### Risk factors in the context:

- The increase of COVID-19 infections in the countries with migratory flows and destinations generated national protocols of prolonged border closures, among other measures.
- The lack of economic resources has had repercussions on the practice of clandestine paid sex, which has other health complications.
- The reduction of the state's income and its prioritisation of public funds to urban areas, leaving behind attention to regions such as the Darien and the MREs.
- The deterioration of good relations between host and migrant communities, which has generated a climate of tension.
- The poor management of waste that leads to breeding spaces for vectors, which may result in the spread of vector borne diseases.

Measures/adjustments to the strategy: The RCSP integrates an approach of participation and accountability to the community, which allows for first-hand knowledge of host communities' concerns, and other complementary actions to promote social cohesion which are planned through its programmes (PPP). In the face of road closures and protests, the RCSP has developed a contingency plan with the support of the IFRC to ensure the continuity of operations in Darien, guarantee the duty of care towards volunteers, and ensure that constant monitoring is maintained to adapt the strategy to changes in the context. As part of the WASH activities, the RCSP carries out hygiene promotion activities such as ERM cleaning and hygiene promotion campaigns with host communities.

### Security risk factors:

- The lack of communication from the authorities to the migrant population and clear information on the different processes and services has generated uncertainty and tension.
- There have been protests and demonstrations, vandalism, and hostilities at the national level during the month of July 2022.



- Damage to facilities and some theft of materials and supplies that were stored in the community's warehouses.
- An increase in the anxiety levels of the members of the migrant community due to the lack of real knowledge of their situation and the actions of the Panamanian authorities.
- Theft of animals, food and groceries by some migrants from the locals, resulting in a sense of animosity.
- Increase and accumulation of garbage, which has even contaminated the rivers.
- The use of public spaces in host communities to defecate, urinate and deposit biological waste, which can lead to a sanitary emergency.
- Lack of water for bathing, which causes people to waste the resource designated for consumption, leaving other people without the possibility of consuming safe water.
- Exposure to the risk of flooding in sector 1 of the La Peñita ERM.
- Increased cases of prostitution, domestic, gender and sexual violence.
- High levels of stress, depression, anxiety, and frustration in the face of immediate reality.

Measures/adjustments to the strategy: the RCSP has a PGI plan for the intervention area; it also provides for self-care actions for staff and volunteers as part of the appeal and other interventions. Monitoring of the security situation is ensured through the Security Officer and security guidance is provided to the teams deployed in the field. Monitoring of the security situation and the different routes taken by the migrants is carried out on a regular basis.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
1. Significant increase in migratory flows and limited funds, compromising response capacity	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment of the operational strategy according to a situation analysis and publication of an operational update made in a coordinated manner between the National Society and IFRC-ARO.</li> <li>• The National Society, with support of the IFRC-ARO, request a revision/increase of the appeal.</li> </ul>
2. Reduced capacity and/or absence of humanitarian agencies due to a lack of funds.	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Society, in coordination with the IFRC-ARO, strengthens the service capabilities according to operational possibilities.</li> </ul>
3. Shortage of resources, such as basic necessities and medicines, due to increased migration and population flows in ERMs and host communities.	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Society, in coordination with the IFRC-ARO, assesses and relocates the RCSP's own migration programme funds, in coordination with multiple partners.</li> </ul>
4. High demand for basic necessities to cover children and people with chronic diseases and	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Society, in coordination with the IFRC-ARO, assesses and relocates the RCSP's own migration</li> </ul>

diarrheal diseases with a possible outbreak of cholera.			programme funds, in coordination with multiple partners.
<b>5.</b> The increase in fuel prices and other items have generated a situation of social instability and directly impact the cost of inputs for the response in general.	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment of the operational strategy according to a situation analysis and publication of an operational update to scale down operations made in a coordinated manner between the National Society and the IFRC-ARO.</li> <li>• National Society meetings with governmental stakeholders for support.</li> <li>• Contingency plan developed by the RCSP and IFRC that is implemented in Darien.</li> </ul>
<b>6.</b> Collapse of services and infrastructure in host communities due to the increase of migrants.	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Society, in coordination with the IFRC-ARO, assesses and relocates the RCSP's own migration programme funds, in coordination with multiple partners.</li> </ul>
<b>7.</b> Overcrowded and collapsed host communities, unable to receive high flows of migrants	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Society holds meetings with governmental stakeholders for support.</li> </ul>

## Quality and accountability

Federation-wide monitoring and reporting are planned and will ensure across all countries and Federation partners, with a harmonised list of indicators collected and reported regularly to represent a complete picture of the IFRC's network solidarity and response efforts. National Societies will collect as much disaggregated data as possible to reflect the needs of the different groups.

Please refer to the regional operational strategy for more details.

# FUNDING REQUIREMENT



## OPERATING STRATEGY

### MDR43008 – Panama Red Cross Mexico and Central American Migration Crisis Emergency Appeal

#### FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

<b>Planned Operations</b>	<b>3,066,000</b>
Multi-purpose Cash	137,000
Health	217,000
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	666,000
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	212,000
Community Engagement and Accountability	126,000
Migration	1,558,000
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	150,000
<b>Enabling Approaches</b>	<b>334,000</b>
Coordination and Partnerships	10,000
National Society Strengthening	324,000

**TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS** **3,400,000**

*all amounts in Swiss francs (CHF)*

## Contact information

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

#### At the Red Cross Society of Panama

- **President:** Elias Solis, [elias.solis@cruzroja.org.pa](mailto:elias.solis@cruzroja.org.pa)
- **General director:** Larissa Rodríguez, [larissa.rodriguez@cruzroja.org.pa](mailto:larissa.rodriguez@cruzroja.org.pa)

#### At the IFRC Americas Region:

- **Head of Central American Country Cluster Delegation:** Nelson Aly; [nelson.alyrodriguez@ifrc.org](mailto:nelson.alyrodriguez@ifrc.org)
- **IFRC Regional Office for Head of Disaster Climate and Crisis:** Roger Alonso Morgui, [roger.morgui@ifrc.org](mailto:roger.morgui@ifrc.org)
- **Operations, Evolving Crisis, and Disasters Manager:** Maria Martha Tuna; [maria.tuna@ifrc.org](mailto:maria.tuna@ifrc.org)
- **Communications Manager:** Susana Arroyo, [susana.arroyo@ifrc.org](mailto:susana.arroyo@ifrc.org)
- **Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Manager:** Pradiip Alvarez (acting); [pradiip.alvarez@ifrc.org](mailto:pradiip.alvarez@ifrc.org)

#### At the IFRC Geneva Headquarters:

- **DREF Senior Officer:** Eszter Matyeka; email: [eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org](mailto:eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org)
- **Operations Coordination Focal Point:** Karla Morizzo (acting); email: [karla.morizzo@ifrc.org](mailto:karla.morizzo@ifrc.org)

**For IFRC Resource Mobilisation and Pledges support:**

- **Head of Partnerships and Resource Development:** Mei Lin Leon (Acting); [meilin.leon@ifrc.org](mailto:meilin.leon@ifrc.org)

**For In-Kind Donations and Mobilisation table support:**

- **Logistics Coordinator:** Mauricio Bustamante, [mauricio.bustamante@ifrc.org](mailto:mauricio.bustamante@ifrc.org)

**Reference**



Click here for:

- [Link to the Emergency Appeal and updates](#)