



DREF Operation - Final Report

Nicaragua | Anticipatory Actions for Tropical Storms

DREF Operation	Operation n° MDRNI012
Date of issue: 6 April 2023	GLIDE n° n/a
Operation start date: 13 June 2022	Operation end date: 31 December 2022
Funding requirements: 176,950 CHF	DREF amount initially allocated: 176,950 CHF
N° of people to be assisted: 1,000 people directly (200 families) 57,986 people indirectly	N° of people assisted: 6,231 people directly 710,990 people indirectly
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Spanish Red Cross (SRC), Italian Red Cross (IRC) and German Red Cross.	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: National Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response System (SINAPRED), Nicaraguan Ministry of Health (MINSa) Civil Defence, Municipal Civil Protection Commissions.	
The Nicaraguan Red Cross spent a total of CHF 146,867. The remaining balance of CHF 30,083 will be returned to the Disaster Response Emergency Fund.	
<i>The major donors and partners of the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as DG ECHO, Blizzard Entertainment, Mondelez International Foundation, Fortive Corporation and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Nicaraguan Red Cross, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.</i>	

[Click here for the final financial report](#) and [here for the contact information.](#)

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

Tropical cyclones are among the natural events that cause the most damage to the population. Their impact on communities depends on the level of risk to which they are exposed and the level of vulnerability.

Historically, Nicaragua has been impacted by tropical cyclones, the most recent being tropical storm Bonnie in May 2022 and category 1 hurricane Julia in October 2022.

During the first week of October 2022, the National Hurricane Center (NOAA) reported the identification of a tropical disturbance in the Atlantic area that potentially threatened to evolve and affect Central America. Subsequently, on 6 October, NOAA reported that the tropical disturbance had become a tropical storm and that the potential impact zone was estimated to be between the communities of Prinzapolka and the Karawala nature reserve in the form of a category 1 hurricane.



Up to that moment, the impact zone of the potential hurricane was quite wide, which implied the need to extend the coverage of preparedness actions for the hurricane's entry. On 8 October, tropical storm Julia became a category 1 hurricane¹ at 5:30 pm and at midnight of the same day it impacted the national territory of Nicaragua.

On 8 October, according to INETER's report on the rapid strengthening of Tropical Storm Julia and in anticipation of its impact as a category 1 hurricane, the Nicaraguan government declared a state of Yellow Alert² throughout the national territory.

On 9 October, Hurricane Julia degraded its intensity and became a tropical storm again. However, the intensity of the rains caused by the hurricane at the national level caused numerous damages and the Nicaraguan government decreed a Red Alert³. Julia caused heavy rainfall, which in turn caused several rivers to overflow, including the Artiwas, Wasminona and Okonwas rivers in the municipality of Rosita, the Malacatoya and Fonseca rivers, Siquia, Mico and Rama, among others, putting the population at risk and damaging social infrastructure such as housing, roads and telecommunications in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS), Central Zelaya and Boaco, interruption of electricity and drinking water services, obstruction of roads due to falling trees, among others.

According to preliminary data released by SINPARED⁴, Julia left major damage. Around 20,000 people were evacuated from the areas of greatest impact and risk, some 15,000 houses were affected to varying degrees, of which almost 700 were totally destroyed and more than 8,000 were affected, mainly with damage to their roofs. There were also reports of 98 health units affected in their infrastructure, including a regional hospital.

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure reported that they participated in the removal and clearing of 516 sites due to falling trees on the country's main roads. They attended to 82 landslides and quickly carried out clearance work to allow the free movement of citizens on this part of the affected road network. They had 17 stretches of road affected by the effect of the dragging of strong currents, infiltration and undermining of pavement structure by runoff.

The devastating forces of Julia damaged several schools in Rivas, Diriamba, Managua and San Rafael del Norte.

The areas of Chontales, Boaco, Jinotega, Rivas, Matagalpa and León were among the worst affected regions.

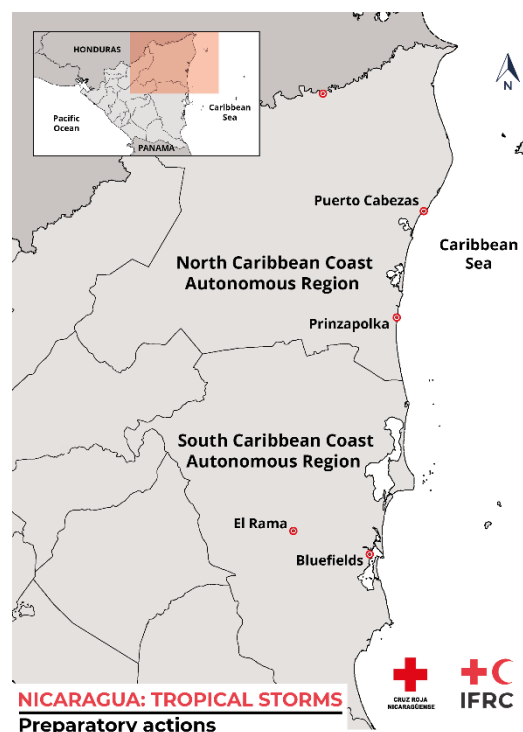
One of the areas most affected was the municipality of El Rama in the South Caribbean, where three rivers converge: Siquia, Mico and Rama, adding to the more than 70 rivers that overflowed nationwide as a result of the rains, leaving villages under water and entire families lost all their belongings.

Summary of current response

Overview of Host National Society

Based on its Strategic Development Plan, which includes response actions and experiences from other events, Nicaraguan Red Cross (NRC) incorporates an institutional and community response preparedness component with an adaptation approach into its efforts. This component covers everything from the activation of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to the supply chain to deliver and strengthen its activities under a resilience approach to reduce risk.

It is important to mention that among the preparedness actions, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) kits, hygiene kits and containers for safe water storage were purchased in advance, reaching a total of 200 families. All this was pre-positioned in the



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.
Data source: CA National Societies, IFRC. Produced by IFRC CA Country cluster (B4 team), March 2023.

Map of intervention areas due to impact of tropical storm Julia. Source: IFRC.

¹ [NHC.NOAA.gov/archive](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/archive)

² [SINAPRED.gob.ni](https://sinapred.gob.ni). Nicaragua declares Yellow Alert due to the arrival of Tropical Storm Julia, 8 October 2022.

³ [SINAPRED.gob.ni](https://sinapred.gob.ni). Nicaragua declares Red Alert after the passage of Julia, 9 October 2022.

⁴ [El19Digital.com](https://el19digital.com). Nicaraguan government provides preliminary information on the consequences of Hurricane Julia, 12 October 2022.

warehouse at Headquarters, ready to be mobilised and delivered to the affected families.

In response to the passage of Hurricane Julia, the NRC implemented preventive actions to mitigate the potential risk of loss of life by activating its network of branches nationwide, deploying specialized response teams to the most vulnerable areas, developing an awareness campaign on prevention and protection measures, as well as inter-institutional coordination at the national level.

In the days prior to the impact of Hurricane Julia, the NRC carried out preparedness actions to respond to the effects that could occur, especially on the Caribbean coast. Brigades were deployed to coordinate actions with local authorities in the municipalities of Puerto Cabezas, Prinzapolka and Bluefields. Equipment and personnel specialised in water, sanitation and hygiene promotion were mobilised, as water sources are particularly affected in this type of event.

Considering the mobilization time due to the remoteness and difficulty of access routes in the Caribbean area, the NRC took the preparatory measure of pre-positioning equipment and personnel ready to respond immediately to the emergency.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

The NRC coordinates and articulates with all members of the Movement, thus improving capacities to respond to adverse events, establishing its emergency funds and capacities. In coordination with Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners, NRC creates action plans composed of strategic lines of intervention that indicate the response and recovery actions that are appropriate to the needs of people affected by any disaster.

The presence of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Nicaragua through its representative in the country is essential to coordinate disaster response actions. Likewise, the technical and financial support of the IFRC regional office, which assists the National Society through its specialized teams to ensure the quality of the intervention logic of the different intervention components such as: water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, health and MHPSS, livelihoods and disaster risk reduction, among others, is of utmost importance. This team helps the NRC to identify priority needs such as damage assessment and needs analysis (DANA) in carrying out preparedness, response, and recovery actions for the population.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) carried out joint actions to address operational security, safer access, operational communication and restoring family links (RFL). Through its country office and its cooperation area, it supported the mobilization of an RFL team to the municipality of El Rama, an area that was completely without access to telecommunications after Hurricane Julia. This team coordinated actions to establish the exchange of messages between family members by means of satellite phone calls provided by the ICRC, managing to assist 52 families who were completely cut off from communication and anxious to have news of their relatives. This is an unprecedented event, as it is the first time during an emergency that the NRC's RFL programme has been coordinated and activated with the support of satellite phones to provide an immediate response to the population in the affected area.

The German Red Cross (GRC), through its delegation in Honduras and its country delegate, conducts climate risk studies regarding extreme hydrometeorological events, coordinating with INETER and SINAPRED to prepare early action plans (anticipation). In addition, the GRC has been supporting the NRC in the training of the WINDY platform and the CVA programme as early action mechanisms. It also supported the immediate re-establishment of the NRC's repeater antenna located on La Gateada hill, which was severely damaged by the strong winds caused by Hurricane Julia.

Italian Red Cross (IRC) carries out Disaster Risk Reduction projects in the south-central part of the country, where they strengthen communities in high vulnerability and mobilize their emergency resources to support the National Society when needed.

The Spanish Red Cross (SRC) implements risk management projects on the northern Caribbean coast of Nicaragua and psychosocial support through the Nicaraguan Red Cross psychosocial support centre, mobilizing its emergency resources and other donors such as the European Union and Spanish organizations.

During the passage of Hurricane Julia, the NRC maintained a constant process of updating Red Cross Movement partners in the country on the development of the meteorological phenomenon in order to design joint preparedness and response actions taking into account the evolving needs of the affected population.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

The NRC, in constant growth to respond as an auxiliary to public authorities and mitigate the different risks that may arise, through a legal framework, carries out coordination actions with SINAPRED to ensure a needs-based response. It also coordinates with other actors, such as private sector companies, international donors, embassies, and United Nations organisations, strengthening the NRC's response to communities. These include:

- The Nicaraguan Institute of Territorial Studies (INETER): Maintains strict and continuous surveillance and monitoring of climatic events. It recommends the declaration of different alerts depending on the evolution of the phenomenon.
- The Nicaraguan Institute for Municipal Development (INIFOM): Updates on critical points in each municipality in urban and rural areas. Provides the number of families and persons in greatest vulnerability. The location of collective centres, among other relevant data, ensures the first response to families. Provides cleaning of riverbeds, sewers and storm water drains in public infrastructure. Updating of municipal and community response plans, households, collective centres, warehouses, and activation of logistical means.
- National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Disaster Response (SINAPRED): Promotion of prevention measures. Updating of response plans. Preparation of community leaders. Monitoring, operation of command posts and activation of the emergency system. Preparing shelter capacity.
- Ministry of Health of Nicaragua (MINSa): Strengthening of organisational sectors, municipalities, hospitals, SILAIS and MINSa at central level. Ensure preparedness to mitigate the effects of disasters such as epidemics, injuries, and damage to health facilities. Promote house-to-house education campaigns with the community network, providing recommendations for cleaning gutters in homes, patios, and proper rubbish collection. Prepare the Influenza Vaccination Plan, applying 222,000 vaccines to children aged 6 to 24 months, pregnant women, and people over 50 years old who suffer from underlying chronic diseases.
- National Police: Make available 100% of the police force and resources in line with the emergency being faced. Establish response measures and actions, particularly contingency plans in the regional delegations and districts of Managua. Activate the support group that assists the executive and emergency management group. Put in place police arrangements to ensure the safety of both people and property during evacuations.
- International cooperation donors (such as ECHO, SDC, World Vision, Japanese Embassy and German Embassy) and private companies that are familiar with the work of the NRC and are long-standing partners and have a strong interest in providing support when planning a humanitarian response and therefore maintain communication with the NRC and activate their cooperation funds to support the humanitarian response actions provided by the National Society to the disaster-affected population.

Before, during and after Hurricane Julia

- SINAPRED offered in a [press conference](#), a series of recommendations to Nicaraguan families to avoid damages and to be clear that the event is present, that is to say, what has changed is its nature, and that there is more the component of the rains that can generate floods and landslides.
- The Nicaraguan Army conducted several [aerial surveys](#) after Hurricane Julia passed over the national territory. Also, in coordination with the Regional and Municipal Committees for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response (COMUPRED), as a preventive measure in view of the imminent impact of Hurricane Julia on the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, [evacuated 605 persons](#) from the communities of Wawa Bar (83 people including 20 minors), Setnet Point (97 people including 22 minors), Tasbapauie (142 people including 24 minors), Barra de Rio Grande (121 people including 68 minors) and Sandy Bay Sirpi (162 people including 82 minors), all evacuated to different shelters in Puerto Cabezas, Pearl Lagoon and Karawala. During the evacuation, the MINSa's protective measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were complied with. They also removed fallen trees at kilometre 125 on the Juigalpa - Managua road, which were blocking traffic.
- The Ministry of Education informed through a [communiqué](#) that, as part of the protection and security measures for children, adolescents and young people in the Basic and Secondary Education Subsystem throughout the national territory and in coherence with the Red Alert declaration, classes were suspended in all public and private schools on 10 October 2022.

- The Nicaraguan government provided immediate response to families affected by Julia by [sending humanitarian aid](#) to the South Caribbean Coast departments of Esteli, Madriz, Nueva Segovia, Leon, Chinandega, Managua, Granada, Carazo, Rivas, Chontales, Rio San Juan, Central Zelaya, Matagalpa, Jinotega, part of the mining sector.
- The National Police sent members of the Search and Rescue Detachment to the RACCN, RACCS, San Juan River and Central Zelaya, prior to the entry of Hurricane Julia.
- United Firefighters of Nicaragua: with a convoy of two evacuation and rescue trucks and 2 rescue vehicles with 15 resources from the search and rescue unit of the United Firefighters of Nicaragua left for the Northern Caribbean Coast to support the response actions.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

Needs analysis

The government presented the consolidated report of damages caused in Nicaragua after the passage of Hurricane Julia⁵. The Minister of Finance and Public Credit shared that Hurricane Julia caused damages amounting to a total of 367.8 million dollars, with damages mainly in infrastructure and in the social, productive, environmental, health and education sectors.

The authorities did not provide a specific detailed report on damage assessments or the process of identifying the total damage caused by Hurricane Julia; however, the magnitude of the event inflicted significant damage on the livelihoods of the population, especially in the municipality of El Rama, as their homes and livelihoods were completely flooded by the overflowing rivers. Other potential effects of the heavy rains are the increase of diseases due to water contamination and the proliferation of vectors, as well as the psychosocial impact suffered by the population after material and economic damage or displacement from their homes to shelters.

According to reports from the national media and the NRC's branches, the municipality of El Rama was identified as one of the most affected areas, where the flooding left houses and household goods unusable, such as electrical appliances that those affected were unable to protect in time. Vehicles were left under water in the main streets and others were swept up to several metres from where they were parked. Telecommunications were affected and the municipality was cut off from communication.

In view of this situation, a NRC's team travelled from headquarters to carry out an on-site assessment of the damage in the municipality of El Rama, noting that most homes had suffered significant damage, both materially and emotionally. According to the testimony of the inhabitants, the accelerated rise of the river level, approximately one metre per hour, was unexpected. The wells were completely flooded and contaminated, the sanitation in homes was deplorable, due to the amount of stagnant mud.

Families approached to the Red Cross branch in El Rama to request support with the cleaning and disinfection of community and family wells, so immediately the proper coordination with the municipal government authorities was carried out and the work of supporting the cleaning of wells and hygiene talks to the population began.

Operation Risk Assessment

In the planning phase of this operation, the NRC identified risks related to natural phenomena, which might have occurred during the life of the project, given the elevated level of vulnerability because of the multiple weather and hydrometeorological hazards to which the country is exposed. To mitigate this risk, the NRC had the following mitigation measures in place:

- Contingency and evacuation plans.
- Implement safety standards throughout the actions' development.
- Information and communication with local actors.
- Refrain from circulating in unrecommended and unauthorized areas.
- Monitor developing hazards (hurricanes, volcanic activity).
- Have a risk analysis for the target territories.

⁵ [E119Digital.com. Nicaraguan authorities present Hurricane Julia consolidated report, 26 October 2022.](#)

- Risk awareness.

The other risk that was initially identified was related to the possibility of an increase in COVID-19 cases, with new waves and variants in various parts of the country, making it difficult to move supplies, isolate intervention areas, and infection of NRC front-line personnel and partners delays the project. To mitigate this risk, the NRC had the following mitigation measures in place:

- Constant monitoring of COVID-19 cases indicators and, if necessary, looking for alternatives or rescheduling that mitigate the effects of the identified risks.
- Constant monitoring, rumours – perceptions regarding the pandemic, the protection measures, and the vaccines.
- Provide streamlined mechanisms to purchase supplies, distribute them to the different branches, and coordinate with the government to ensure access to intervention areas.
- Apply biosafety protocols, ensure availability of supplies, protocols for field visits, etc.

However, the operation biggest risk ended up being the implementation of the CVA program, which was not identified during the planning phase of the operation.

Initially it was foreseen that the event would affect other areas of the Caribbean Coast, so a market mapping and supplier guide had been carried out beforehand to explain the delivery mechanism and the corresponding agreements for the implementation of the CVA programme.

Because the area affected by Hurricane Julia was very large, the National Society was forced to expand the possible area of coverage and therefore to make changes to the Emergency Plan of Action. Monitoring and evaluations were carried out with the support of the national branches and brigades with specialised personnel were deployed from national headquarters to the areas where it was expected that Julia would have the strongest impact.

The municipality of El Rama was most affected at the national level. The NRC immediately mobilised to the area to verify the conditions in which the local market had been left, to assess the possibility of having an adequate structure to develop the CVA program.

Although the access road to the municipality of El Rama is in very good condition and safe, due to the impact of Hurricane Julia, the municipality was cut off from communication due to the flooding of the rivers that surround it and the severe damage to telecommunications. As soon as land access was restored, the National Society in coordination with the ICRC deployed RFL staff with satellite phones to help families communicate with their loved ones in other regions.

Despite the damage caused by Hurricane Julia in the municipality of El Rama, commerce was reactivated almost immediately, so the National Society set out with the support of the authorities of the El Rama branch to visit suppliers and explain the dynamics of the intervention.

Owners of the establishments visited in the municipality of El Rama were very distrustful because they did not know about the CVA program. Similarly, they did not feel confident with the method of payment that was proposed to them, because they had to attend to 50% of the people reached to receive the first payment and the other 50% once it was concluded. It was explained to them that to select a supplier, they had to present their proposal with the legal documentation of the business in order and that once selected, a contract would be signed between the supplier and NRC.

The response of the providers during the visits was of great concern to the NRC team because, if no facility decided to participate, it would not be possible to implement the CVA program as planned.

After the visits, the TORs and time of receipt were published, only three establishments sent proposals:

1. Supplier A: sent a letter stating that it did not accept to work according to NRC's proposal, requesting payment in advance.
2. Supplier B: submitted a financial proposal but no legal documentation.
3. Supplier C: submitted the best economic proposal, legal documentation, and acceptance of the terms of reference proposed by NRC.

Even after signing the contract with the owner of Supplier C, another visit was made to reassure the owner, emphasizing the principles and values of the Red Cross. In this way, the families reached with food vouchers were successfully assisted.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Proposed strategy

Considering the needs to which the population was exposed in the aftermath of Hurricane Julia, an immediate response to ensure the food security of families, as well as mental health and access to appropriate water, hygiene, and sanitation services, was of paramount importance to provide an effective and timely humanitarian response to the affected population.

Because the population of El Rama was almost entirely affected by the flooding caused by the rising rivers, to identify the 200 people to be reached by the Cash Transfer Programme through vouchers, coordination was carried out with the Red Cross branch in El Rama who, as first responders, supported the evacuation of the population and carried out the initial DANA. The authorities of this branch provided information based on the initial reports of identification of vulnerable families located in areas most affected and in this way selected families that met criteria such as: having been affected by the passage of Hurricane Julia, female head of household, at least one member with a disability or chronic illness, family with only one member with a disability or chronic illness, family with only one member with a disability or chronic illness, family with only one member with a disability or chronic illness, and family with only one member with a disability or chronic illness. older adults, large families, families without regular income, households headed by minors or older adults, families that lost their livelihoods.

Overall objective of the operation:

Contribute to mitigating the impact of a potential hurricane on approximately 200 vulnerable families living in high-risk areas and approximately 57,986 people with early warning messages.

Main lines of intervention:

- Livelihoods and basic needs
- Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene promotion
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Protection, Gender and Inclusion: Restoring Family Links

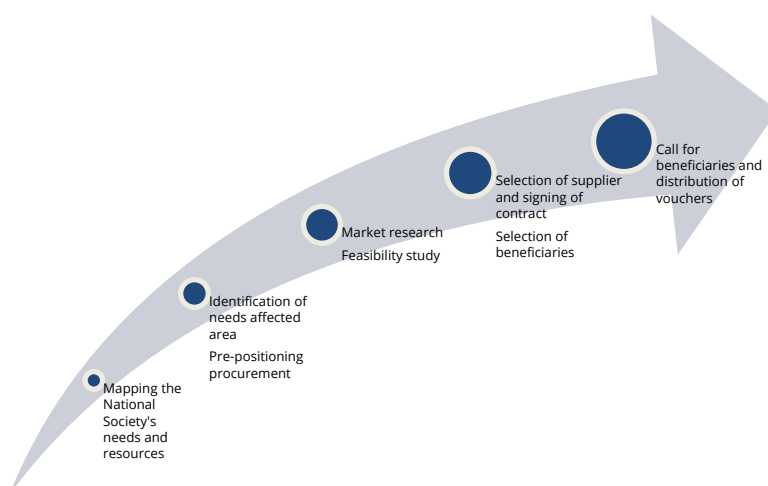
C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

 Livelihoods and basic needs People reached: 1,000 Male: 419 Female: 581			
Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore, and strengthen their livelihoods			
Indicators:		Target	Actual
# of people reached with cash and voucher assistance for basic needs		1,000	1,000
Output 1.2: Basic needs assistance for livelihoods security including food is provided to the most affected communities.			
Indicators:		Target	Actual
# of households reached with CVA for basic needs		200	200
Narrative description of achievements			

Two hundred families in the municipality of El Rama were reached with Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), by means of vouchers redeemable for food and hygiene items, amounting to NIO 7,333.00 each (approximately CHF 183).

It is important to mention that prior to the delivery of vouchers, a feasibility and market study was carried out to determine the most appropriate mechanism to implement and ensure the registration of suppliers that met the eligibility requirements in the North and South Caribbean area of the country, identifying the delivery of vouchers as the most appropriate mechanism.

This required market mapping and a visit to suppliers in the Caribbean region of the country, as it was considered the area with the highest level of exposure to the event.



After the passage of Hurricane Julia, the population of El Rama was identified as one of the most affected municipalities. Assistance for the food security of the families was extremely essential. Indeed, according to reports from field visits, there was an urgent need to support these households, whose homes had been flooded by the rising waters of the surrounding rivers. Therefore, it was a priority for the National Society to develop immediate actions in accordance with the needs identified and the level of affectation of the population.

In addition to the vouchers that could be exchanged for food or hygiene products, 200 families were given talks on MHPSS, hygiene and proper water storage. They were also given an MHPSS kit, a hygiene kit, and containers to store water safely.

A post-distribution evaluation was carried out by means of a survey, where the degree of satisfaction of the people reached was consulted. Focus group sessions were also held where people assisted were able to express their views freely and spontaneously on the response provided by the NRC.

During the focus groups sessions, one of the questions asked was about how they felt about the assistance provided during the intervention. The response to this question was very positive, as many people were not expecting cash assistance, including widows, people with disabled children, and in general, people in a difficult economic situation. Three focus group sessions and perception surveys were conducted.

They were also asked if they considered better the delivery of the voucher or food packages and all the people reached agreed that the voucher is better because they can choose what they really need. They also mentioned positive things about the grocery store where they presented the voucher, as there was variety, and the service was very good.

One of the lessons learned from this consultation process is to ensure that the selected supplier has cooking gas available.

Post distribution survey results					
Question	Yes	No	Satisfied	Not very satisfied	Dissatisfied
1. Do you consider the treatment of the staff to have been adequate?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
2. In your opinion, were you provided with all the information required for the process?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
3. Do you consider that there were security incidents in the distribution of the voucher?	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%
4. Do you consider that there was abuse or corruption on the part of the personnel involved in the selection or distribution?	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%
5. Do you consider the timing of the distribution process to be adequate?	84.5%	15.5%	84.5%	15.5%	0%

6. Do you consider that the assistance was provided in an accessible way, without limitations to access the aid (availability of the place, timetable, staff)?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
7. Was the assistance appropriate for you?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
8. Do you consider that you were adequately served in the establishment (grocery store)?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
9. Do you consider that there was any kind of discrimination or restriction on your access to aid?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%
10. Do you feel that your opinion was taken into account in identifying assistance according to your needs?	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%



*Delivery of vouchers, SMAPS kits, hygiene kits and safe water storage containers. El Rama, December 2022.
Source: NRC.*

Challenges

- One of the challenges faced by the NRC was the urgent implementation of market mapping in the municipality of El Rama, due to the damage suffered by businesses in the area.
- Another challenge was the distrust of suppliers in the municipality, as this was the first time that assistance to the population was provided by means of vouchers.
- Identify a mechanism to prevent fraud when redeeming vouchers. On this occasion, a high relief stamp was implemented.

Lessons Learned

- It is extremely necessary to keep the supplier network updated, to speed up the processes and activate the mechanism in the shortest possible time. This update should be carried out by the administrative management of each branch, as this gives greater confidence and openness to establish commercial relations quickly with suppliers.
- Regularly inform suppliers about the Cash and Voucher Assistance programme, in order to reduce the lack of confidence that exists due to lack of knowledge.
- Train a greater number of volunteers in the Cash and Voucher Assistance programme.



Health

People reached: 1,265

Male: 513

Female: 752

Outcome 6: The psychosocial impacts of the emergency are lessened

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people (people targeted and volunteers) who receive self-care sessions	1,100	1,446

Output 6.1: Psychosocial support provided to the target population as well as to RCRC volunteers and staff.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of volunteers and staff who receive self-care session	100	181
# of people who receive self-care sessions	1,000 (200 families)	1,265

Narrative description of achievements

Mental health care is an integral part of the quality humanitarian assistance that the NRC usually provides during emergencies. The Psychosocial Support Network was immediately activated to respond to the needs caused by the passage of Hurricane Julia. Support was provided to 110 children who were in shelters in Prinzapolka and Puerto Cabezas, and after the hurricane, MHPSS sessions were given to the 200 families who benefited from the CVA by means of vouchers, who were also given a MHPSS kit.

As per the project action plan, MHPSS sessions were also conducted with a total of 181 intervening staff. Staff from the NRC's Psychosocial Care Centre were mobilized to provide sessions to staff who responded during the emergency in the main municipalities such as El Rama, Bluefields, Nueva Guinea and Headquarters.

Post-event stress relief and relaxation exercises were conducted, so that participants could share their experiences during the emergency and keep them in their memory in a positive way.

235 MHPSS backpacks and 8 community kits were purchased to ensure the necessary supplies to provide this type of assistance. The community MHPSS kits were used in the sessions given to affected people in Puerto Cabezas, Prinzapolka and El Rama. 200 MHPSS backpack kits were distributed during the operation and the remaining 35 were delivered to the National Society, which remain pre-positioned in NRC's warehouse.



MHPSS sessions for people affected by Hurricane Julia during different interventions. RAAS, 2022.

The mental and emotional health of the staff involved is a priority in humanitarian response missions provided by the NRC in any type of disaster or emergency.

For this reason, self-care sessions were conducted with staff who participated during the response to the effects of Hurricane Julia.

Through this DREF, sessions were conducted with staff from Headquarters and branches in El Rama, Bluefields, Nueva Guinea.

These sessions were developed by staff from the Psychosocial Care Centre of the NRC and included spaces for relaxation and reflection on the experiences lived during the response and the work carried out under the Seven Fundamental Principles, which allow care for all without discrimination, or distinction of race or political or religious creed.

These sessions were extremely important because they helped staff to manage stress and take care of their mental health. Similarly, these sessions allowed them to acquire skills and abilities for the management of the different emotions experienced by staff who are always on hand to respond to emergencies and disasters that occur in the country.



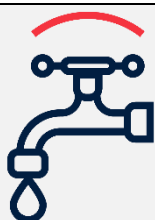
Self-care sessions for NRC responders, August 2022. Source: NRC.

Challenges

One of the most important challenges was not having a space that provided the necessary conditions to deliver the MHPSS sessions to the population. To overcome this, the sessions were held in the facilities of the NRC branch in El Rama. Groups of 25 people were organised, and two sessions were held simultaneously in the morning and two in the afternoon.

Lessons Learned

- The importance of having a MHPSS network at branch level and trained staff. Because the branch had trained MHPSS staff, it was not necessary to mobilise specialised staff to deliver the sessions to affected families.
- The advance purchase of backpacks and community kits made it easier to plan the sessions in a timely manner, as the support tools were available to facilitate the talks.



Water, sanitation, and hygiene

People reached: 6,231

Male: 2,676

Female: 3,555

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

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people reached with WASH services	1,000	6,231

Output 1.1: Continuous assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene situation is carried out in targeted communities

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of families who receive a hygiene kit	200	200

Output 1.2: Daily access to safe water which meets Sphere and WHO standards in terms of quantity and quality is provided to target population.

Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i># of families who received talks on hygiene and water storage</i>	200	295
<i># of families who received safe water storage items</i>	200	200

Narrative description of achievements

In this area of intervention there were changes due to the context in which the event took place. Initially, what was proposed in the operation was to carry out a water study in the selected affected area. This study was suspended since the event was already underway and there was no specific area assigned by the government authorities to implement it. Therefore, with due authorisation, the budget allocated for this activity was used to purchase equipment and supplies to strengthen the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion area. This was a joint decision between NRC and IFRC authorities.

In response to the threat posed by Hurricane Julia in the country, 6 water treatment plants were mobilised together with the WaSH National Intervention Team (NIT) to the municipalities of Prinzapolka, Bluefields, Puerto Cabezas, Waspam, Nueva Guinea and Rivas. Drinking water was supplied to the population in the municipality of Bluefields in coordination with the corresponding response authorities.

Following the event, coordination was carried out with the local government authorities of El Rama for joint work between the NRC, the municipal mayor's office and the Committee for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response (COMUPRED). The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion intervention unit was deployed to support the cleaning of wells were flooded and contaminated in the neighbourhoods of Rigoberto López Pérez, San Pedro, Santa Rosa, Memorial Sandino, Germán Pomares, Central, primavera, Justo Pastor Dinamarca, Rosario Murillo, Procoma, Villa Marx and Villa Morosqui, cleaning 188 wells, reaching 977 families (4,885 people).

Additionally, the purchase of jerry cans for the storage of hygiene kits, which were also distributed in El Rama, was made at the warehouse at Headquarters. In parallel with the distribution of these containers, talks were given to promote hygiene, sanitation, and proper water storage, to mitigate the potential spread of diseases related to water quality and hygiene in the population of El Rama, due to the contamination of wells and the stagnation of mud. A total of 217 plastic containers of 15 gallons each were purchased to store water, of which 200 were distributed and 17 were pre-positioned in the NRC warehouse.



Teams and equipment mobilised to the Northern and Southern Caribbean area, October 2022. Source: NRC.



Cleaning of wells in the municipality of El Rama, October 2022. Source: NRC.



Talks on hygiene and proper water storage, October 2022. Source: NRC.

Challenges

- Not having a safe area close to the municipality where the water unit would have been pre-positioned to respond immediately to the needs of the population.
- Not having standardised formats to be used during the response. This refers to pre-prepared formats that are ready to be used to collect the necessary information on WaSH during an emergency, preferably digitally, so that brigades mobilised in different areas provide the same type of information. This is to ensure that the source data is internally consistent, i.e., that each type of data has the same type of content and format.

Lessons learned

- Provide a safe area to ensure the pre-positioning of water treatment plants and equipment necessary for the distribution of safe water in vulnerable areas. In the case of Waspam and Prinzapolka, work is already underway, as the aid stations will be the ideal place for this.



Disaster Risk Reduction

People reached indirectly: 710,990

Male: n/a

Female: n/a

Outcome 1: Outcome 1: Communities in high-risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disaster

Output 1.1: Communities take active steps to strengthen their preparedness for timely effective response

Indicators:	Target	Actual
# of people who have access to disaster warning information sources.	231,944	710,990

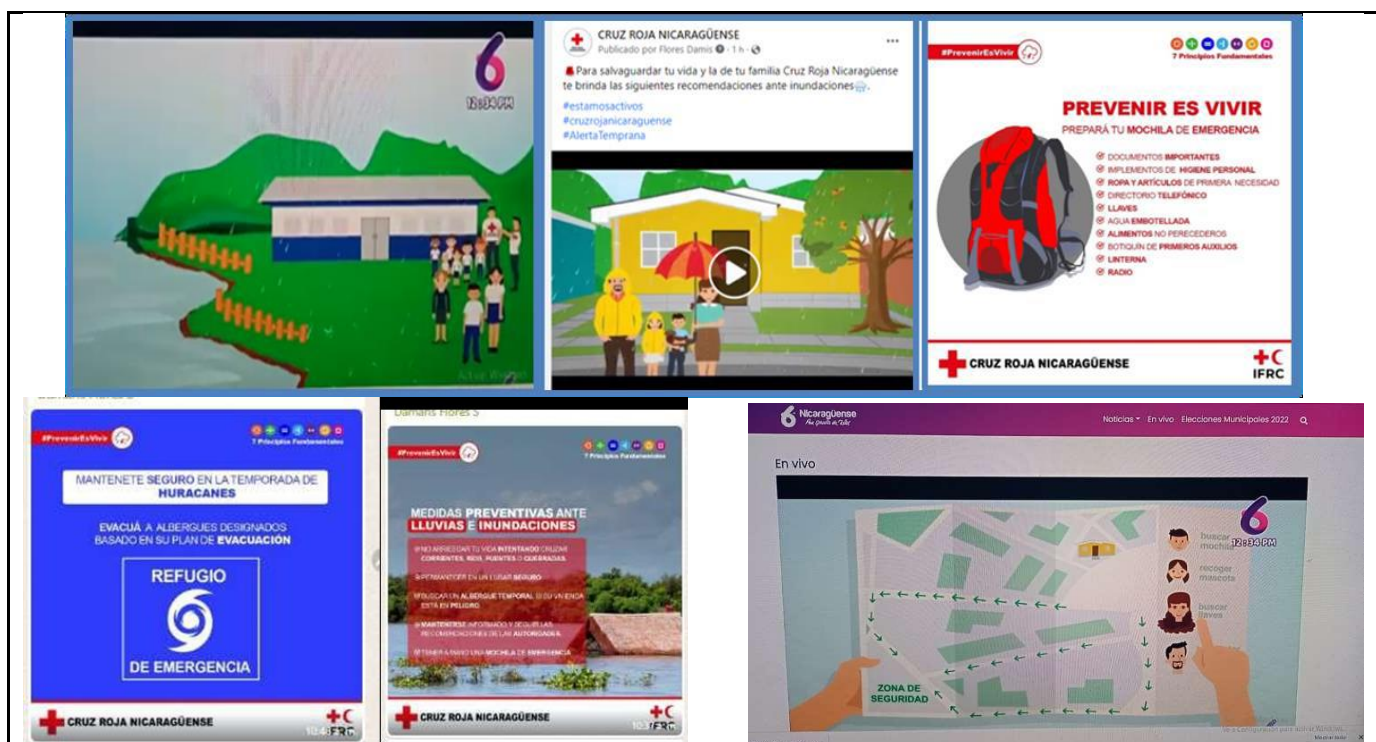
Narrative description of achievements

As part of the prevention actions carried out by the NRC to protect the lives of the population, an awareness campaign was developed to promote the implementation of prevention measures in households in the face of Hurricane Julia. This campaign had national coverage through the dissemination of key messages such as the importance of having a response plan at home, risk identification and the importance of applying the guidelines of response institutions. These messages were broadcast on Costeñísima TV, Caribe media, Channel 4, Channel 6, Radio YA, Radio Sandino, and local radio stations in Puerto Cabezas (Radio La Costeñísima, Radio Bonita FM, Radio Bilwi) reaching more than ten indigenous communities. In the case of the latter, key messages were broadcasted in Miskito, English Creole, and Spanish to ensure adaptation to the context of the intervention.

Likewise, key messages were permanently disseminated through social networks and official media of the Nicaraguan Red Cross. The campaign was developed in the three stages of the event before, during and after, reaching 710,990 people.

Communication campaign reach	
Media	People reached
Facebook	571,227
Instagram	68,534
Costeñísima TV	71,229
Total	710,990

Initially, a mass campaign was planned mainly in the Caribbean Coast (the target of people to be reached corresponds to the population of the Northern and Southern Caribbean Coast), however, the campaign was launched at national level on the NRC's social media accounts, which allowed a wider reach, therefore the high number of people reached on the indicator.



Key messages that formed part of the awareness-raising campaign and were disseminated through different national media, October 2022. Source: NRC.

Challenges

- Not having a network of media providers in the Caribbean region.
- National HQ staff were quickly mobilised to make direct contact with local media management and to establish a contract for the spot and translation of the key messages to be transmitted.
- Due to time constraints, it was not possible to carry out the NEAT+ environmental field assessments.

Lessons learned

- Have an updated national media logbook.
- Continue the good practice of having key messages developed for different types of events, as they are only disseminated at the time of the emergency.

Strategies for implementation

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
<i>NS has the necessary resources to implement the operation during the 7 months of the operation</i>	Yes	Yes
Output S1.1.4: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i># of volunteers that receive PPE and insurance</i>	150	250
Output S1.1.7: NS capacity to support community-based disaster risk reduction, response and preparedness is strengthened		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i># of people hired to implement the activities</i>	2	1

<i>A mass media campaign (local radio and TV) is implemented from the green alert to inform and raise awareness in the population about the evolution of a tropical cyclone and prevention measures</i>	1	1
Outcome S2.1: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i>RC provides assistance to the NS during the 7 months of the operation</i>	Yes	Yes
Output S2.1.2: Effective and respected surge capacity mechanism is maintained.		
Indicators:	Target	Actual
<i># of IFRC monitoring visits</i>	3	1
Narrative description of achievements		
To guarantee the safety and visibility of volunteers, basic equipment was delivered to the Rapid Response Brigades of the branches (Tipitapa, Juigalpa, Boaco, León, Chinandega, Sébaco, Estelí, Somoto, Ocotal, Matagalpa, Jinotega, Santo Tomas, El Rama, Nueva Guinea and Bluefields) where the greatest damage was reported due to Julia's trajectory. At that time, the capes to be purchased with DREF funds were still in the process of being made. From the emergency stock at Headquarters, the volunteers were given capes, T-shirts, rubber boots and bibs with NRC visibility to the branches in: Tipitapa, Boaco, Camoapa, Chinandega, Corinto, Chichigalpa, León, Nueva Segovia, Bluefields, El Rama, Santo Tomas, Juigalpa, Jinotega, Somoto, Estelí, Ocotal, Sébaco, Rivas, Matagalpa and Managua. Volunteers mobilised in brigades from specialised areas to the North and South Caribbean Coast were provided with personal protective equipment and hygiene kits. Similarly, as the municipality of El Rama was the most affected, volunteers were given hygiene and personal protection kits and were provided with alcohol and chlorine in gallons so that they could disinfect the different areas of both the branch and their homes, as their houses were affected by the overflowing of the rivers. Following up on the activities carried out in the municipality of El Rama, the Disaster Risk Management Coordinator of the IFRC's Central American Cluster, the National Relief Director of NRC and the project coordinator travelled to the area. Through this visit it was possible to verify the achievements reached in the DREF, through working sessions with focus groups made up of people assisted where they were consulted on the selection process, the call for applications and the final delivery of the assistance. During this consultation period, the NRC was able to hear from the recipients about their experiences of the damage caused by Hurricane Julia, both emotionally and in terms of their property. They also commented on the joy and positive impact that being part of the activities developed through this project had on them. They affirmed that it was the first time that after an event, those affected received support through a voucher with which they could decide freely and take home what they most needed. A visit was also made to the commerce where the food vouchers were exchanged, and the owner said she was pleased to have worked with the Red Cross. She said that although she was initially wary because it was the first time this voucher mechanism had been developed in the area, the experience was positive, and she is willing to work with the Red Cross again with this type of programmess.		



NRC volunteers receive protection and visibility equipment, July 2022. Source: NRC.

Challenges

- Initially it was planned to hire two people (a coordinator and an administrative assistant), but only the coordinator was hired due to delays in the recruitment process, and the budget allocated for the hiring of the second person was used to cover part of the coordinator's salary during the extension months.

Lessons learned

- As part of the follow-up and monitoring of the programmed activities, the authorities of the national executive committee of the NRC participated. From the market study stage, this accompaniment was present to define the conditions of the area and to be able to clearly determine the relevant actions to be carried out to optimize resources. Subsequently, when the municipality of El Rama was identified as an intervention area for the CVA, NRC authorities also followed up on the identification and selection of people to be assisted, as well as the delivery of food vouchers and other items received by the families.
- The IFRC was always present supporting and advising on the different technical aspects to achieve the implementation of the CVA program.

D. Financial Report

Adjustments were made to the Operation DREF budget. Due to the widespread impact of Hurricane Julia in Nicaragua, it was essential to make modifications to the initial action plan.

The main changes are detailed below.

- Cancellation of the implementation of a water study in the intervention zone, these funds were used instead for the salary of the coordinator, due to the time extension of the operation.
- Desist from acquiring external insurance for 150 volunteers, to allocate these funds to the acquisition of water equipment, the mobilisation of personnel who would support the distribution of humanitarian aid to be delivered during the immediate response. IFRC insurance was used instead for the 250 volunteers that participated in this operation.
- Cancel coordination with SINAPRED to carry out the Protocol for the activation of suppliers, due to time constraints.
- Revoke the implementation of the NEAT assessment, due to time constraints.

This was done to allocate these funds to the acquisition of water equipment and the mobilisation of personnel who would support the distribution of humanitarian aid during this immediate response, as well as the personnel deployed to clean wells and promote hygiene in the affected areas.

Subsequently, a new modification was made to the budget which consisted of transferring the remainder of the NEAT line to cover the December salary and liquidation of the Project Coordinator, and the remainder of the accommodation line to the fuel and vehicle repair line. It should be noted that both lines in which movements were made are operational and remained within the established operating expenditure percentages.

Reference documents

Click here for:

- [DREF Plan of Action \(EPoA\)](#)
- [Operation update 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.

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022/6-2023/1	Operation	MDRNI012
Budget Timeframe	2022/6-2022/12	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 27/Feb/2023

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRNI012 - Nicaragua - Prep. actions for Tropical Cyclones

Operating Timeframe: 13 jun 2022 to 31 dic 2022

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	176.950
FBAF Allocations	176.950
Expenditure	-146.867
Closing Balance	30.083

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods	43.931	43.576	355
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash			0
PO04 - Health	13.845	13.471	374
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	15.975	24.543	-8.568
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	10.650	4.564	6.086
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			0
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	84.401	86.154	-1.753
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships	15.230	1.879	13.351
EA02 - Secretariat Services	17.040	27	17.013
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	60.279	58.807	1.472
Enabling Approaches Total	92.549	60.713	31.836
Grand Total	176.950	146.867	30.083

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022/6-2023/1	Operation	MDRNI012
Budget Timeframe	2022/6-2022/12	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 27/Feb/2023

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRNI012 - Nicaragua - Prep. actions for Tropical Cyclones

Operating Timeframe: 13 jun 2022 to 31 dic 2022

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	70.000	72.818	-2.818
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	10.000	10.830	-830
Medical & First Aid		5.026	-5.026
Teaching Materials	20.000	13.401	6.599
Utensils & Tools		3.885	-3.885
Cash Disbursement	40.000	39.675	325
Logistics, Transport & Storage	11.100	13.319	-2.219
Transport & Vehicles Costs	11.100	13.319	-2.219
Personnel	48.000	22.188	25.812
International Staff	16.000		16.000
National Society Staff	10.000	8.944	1.056
Volunteers	22.000	12.179	9.821
Other Staff Benefits		1.065	-1.065
Consultants & Professional Fees	250		250
Consultants	250		250
Workshops & Training	6.000	10.840	-4.840
Workshops & Training	6.000	10.840	-4.840
General Expenditure	30.800	18.738	12.062
Travel	7.500	1.734	5.766
Information & Public Relations	14.500	11.988	2.512
Office Costs	2.300	3.087	-787
Communications	6.000	1.332	4.668
Financial Charges	500	501	-1
Other General Expenses		96	-96
Indirect Costs	10.800	8.964	1.836
Programme & Services Support Recover	10.800	8.964	1.836
Grand Total	176.950	146.867	30.083