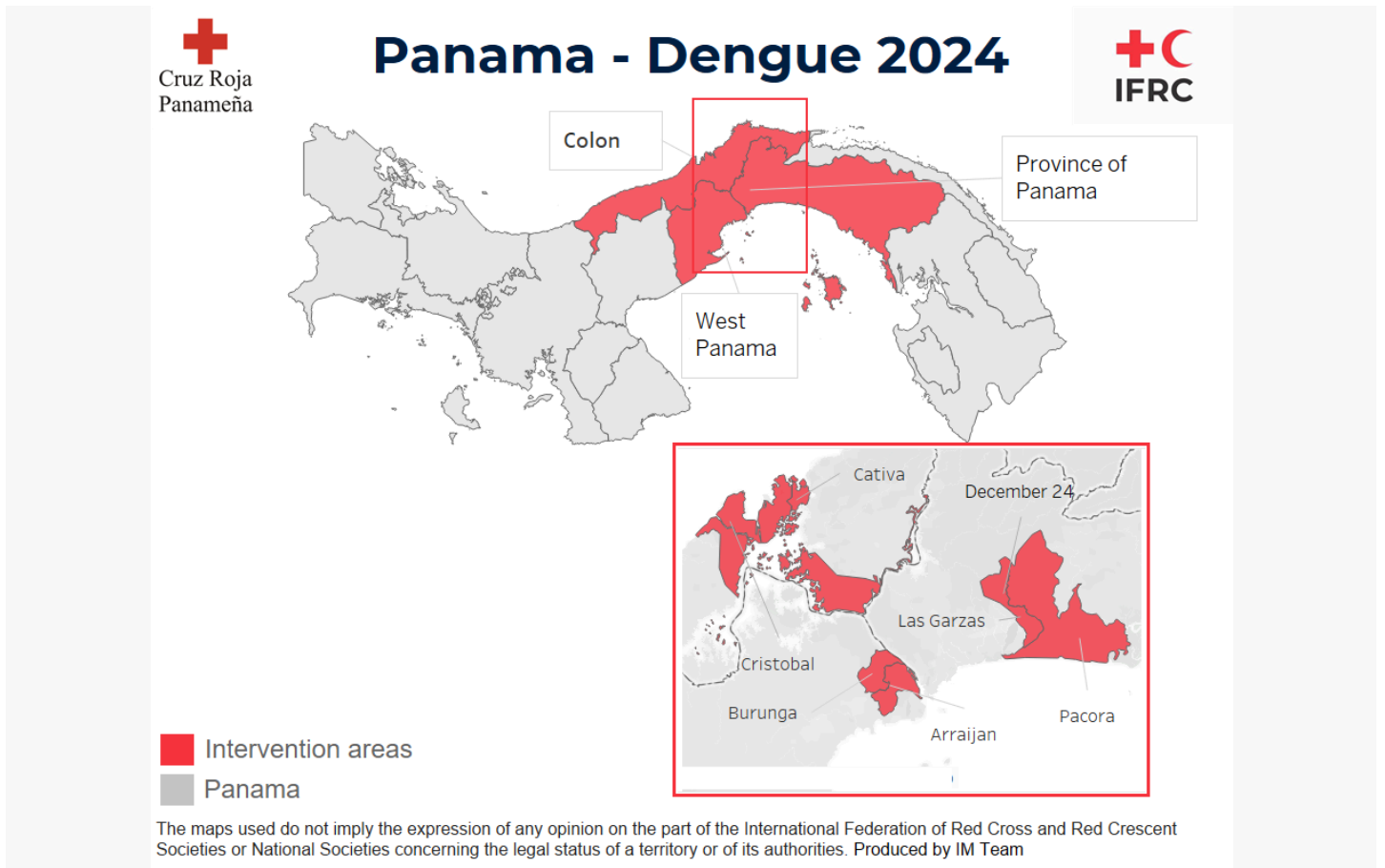




The Red Cross Society of Panama held school activities to educate children on dengue prevention, symptom recognition, and timely action. They provided dynamic talks and activity kits for interactive learning. Source: RCSP

Appeal: MDRPA019	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 420,995	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Epidemic
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 29,229 people	People Targeted: 60,000 people	
Event Onset: Slow	Operation Start Date: 20-08-2024	New Operational End Date: 28-02-2025	Total Operating Timeframe: 6 months
Reporting Timeframe Start Date: 20-08-2024		Reporting Timeframe End Date: 30-11-2024	
Additional Allocation Requested: 0		Targeted Areas: Colon, Panama	

Description of the Event



Areas prioritized by this IFRC-DREF Dengue. Source: IFRC

Date when the trigger was met

09-08-2024

What happened, where and when?

Dengue is a major public health concern in the Americas region, where climatic conditions and urban infrastructure favor the proliferation of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, the main vector of this disease. The region faces a high incidence of dengue, with recurrent epidemic cycles that challenge public health systems in many countries. Factors such as rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and the El Niño phenomenon contribute to its spread. Rapid population growth and unplanned urbanization are also crucial factors; poor housing and inadequate water and sanitation services facilitate the creation of mosquito breeding sites in discarded objects and other containers used to collect water.

On February 16, 2024, the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), alerted by the behavior of dengue in the first weeks of the year, with an exponential increase in cases in several countries of the Americas region, reiterated the call to Member States to intensify efforts to control the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. They also urged us to continue with surveillance, early diagnosis, and timely treatment of dengue cases. At the same time, they called for the organization of the health care services network to facilitate access and proper management of patients, to prevent complications and deaths associated with this disease. They also emphasized the need to strengthen communication campaigns to increase community participation in reducing mosquito breeding sites and seeking timely medical attention (1).

Between epidemiological weeks 1 and 28 of 2024, a total of 10,893,547 suspected cases of dengue were reported in the Americas region, with a cumulative incidence of 1,154 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. This figure represents an increase of 233% compared to the same period in 2023 and 418% over the average for the last 5 years (2).

In Panama, the increase in the number of dengue cases has also been a cause for concern among health authorities and is considered a significant threat to public health. The Ministry of Health, through resolution N. 1580 of July 25, 2024, has declared a Dengue Health Alert

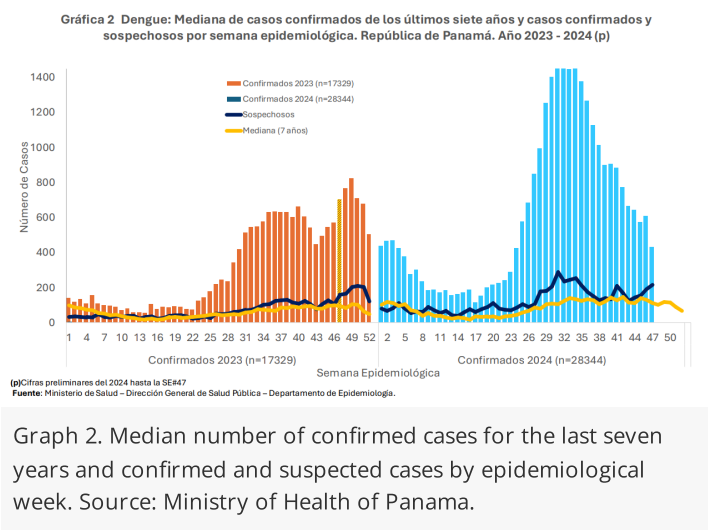
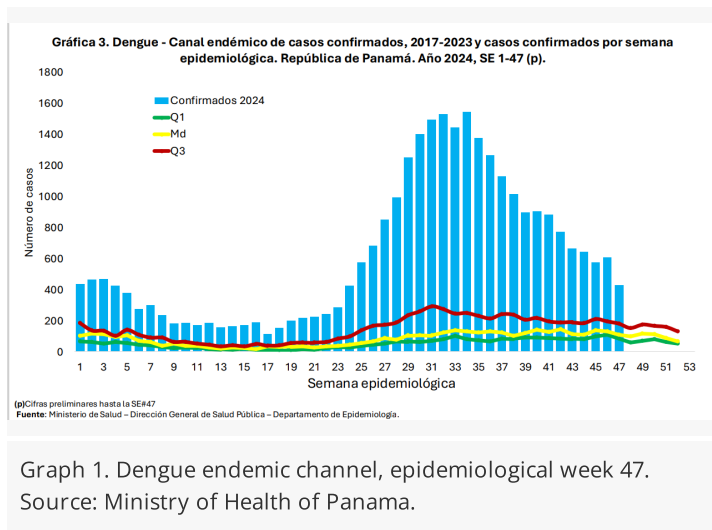


in the Health Regions of Panama Metro, Colon, Panama Oeste, and Panama Este (3).

The Gorgas Memorial Institute (ICGES) reported that the four dengue serotypes that have been present from 2018 to 2024 are currently circulating in Panama; DENV-1 (genotype V), DENV-2 (Asian American genotype), DENV-3 (genotype III) and DENV-4 (genotype II). They also pointed out that the Cosmopolitan genotype of serotype DENV-2, which is strongly impacting dengue morbimortality in several countries of the region, has not yet been detected in Panama.

On August 9, 2024, the Panamanian Ministry of Health formally requested the collaboration of the Red Cross Society of Panama to join the comprehensive response within the national plan in response to the dengue health alert. This collaboration seeks to strengthen dengue control and prevention measures in the country, in an effort to mitigate the spread of the disease and its devastating effect the population.

Finally, on October 9, 2024, the Ministry of Health held a technical coordination meeting to evaluate the progress of actions implemented for dengue prevention and management in the country. During the session, it was determined that strengthening preventive and control measures during the summer months remains essential, particularly in highly vulnerable areas, such as those with a history of dengue outbreaks. In this context, the Ministry requested the National Society to extend its interventions in the same previously prioritized geographic areas to reinforce the response to this public health challenge.



Graph 1. Dengue endemic channel, epidemiological week 47. Source: Ministry of Health of Panama.

Graph 2. Median number of confirmed cases for the last seven years and confirmed and suspected cases by epidemiological week. Source: Ministry of Health of Panama.

Scope and Scale

In the latest report issued by the Ministry of Health for Epidemiological Week 47, preliminarily 48 cases of Dengue with Warning Signs (WS), 6 severe dengue (SD) and 376 Dengue without WS have been reported; compared to 50 Dengue with WS, 2 SD and 403 Dengue without WS respectively, in 2023. Cumulatively, in 2024, all cases are higher; 2,849 Dengue with WS, 232 SD and 26,148 Dengue without WS; compared to 1,211, 32 and 11,707 for the same period in 2023.

From a demographic perspective, the distribution of cases between men and women is a 1:1.04 ratio. Young people between the ages of 10 and 19 are the most affected age group, with a rate of 906.8 cases for age group 10-14 and 846.9 for age group 15-19 per 100,000 inhabitants. However, the 25-49 age group has the highest number of cases, totaling 10,483.

In terms of hospitalizations and deaths, 44 new hospitalizations have been reported on EW 47, totaling 2,451. The Panama Metro region has the highest number of hospitalizations (673), followed by Panamá Oeste (317) and Colón (283). Up to EW 47, 50 deaths have been accumulated, of which 23 correspond to those in the age groups 15 to 59 years; 19 over 60 years of age and 8 in children under 15 years of age. Up to EW47, 50 deaths have been accumulated, of which 23 correspond to those in the age groups 15 to 59 years; 19 over 60 years of age and eight (8) in children under 15 years of age.

Throughout 2023 and during 2024, Dengue cases have remained in the epidemic zone. As of EW23 of 2024, there was a sustained increase in cases reaching, between EW 31-34, more than 1,000 cases per week. From SEW 35 to 46 there was a reversal in this trend; however, in week 46 there was a small increase in cases, which could be maintained in EW47 once the results of suspects are updated (Graphs 1 and 2).

Dengue has a profound and multifaceted impact on people lives, with particularly acute repercussions in vulnerable groups. The disease not only poses a direct risk to individual health, but also triggers social and economic consequences that can perpetuate cycles of poverty and exclusion. Severe complications arising from dengue require prolonged medical care, generating significant costs and loss of income due to incapacity to work. In communities with limited resources, these expenses can have devastating effects, forcing families to choose



between essential medical care and other basic needs.

Also at the educational level, school absenteeism due to dengue directly affects the learning process, which can have long-term consequences on students' academic and professional development.

In addition, dengue can lead to social isolation, deteriorating community cohesion, and exacerbating the emotional and psychological vulnerability of those affected. It universally affects urban and rural populations, but specific groups such as the elderly, minors, individuals with obesity, pregnant women, and people with chronic conditions such as diabetes face a particularly high risk.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Ministry of Health - Health alert due to increase in dengue cases	https://www.minsa.gob.pa/noticia/ministerio-de-salud-declara-alerta-sanitaria-por-aumento-de-casos-de-dengue
2. PAHO/WHO - Epidemiological Alert: Increase in cases of dengue in the Region of the Americas	https://reliefweb.int/report/world/alerta-epidemiologica-aumento-de-casos-de-dengue-en-la-region-de-las-americas-16-de-febrero-del-2024
3. Ministry of Health - Weekly Dengue Epidemiological Report week 47	https://minsa.gob.pa/sites/default/files/publicacion-general/informe-de-dengue-se47-de-vf.pdf
4. PAHO - Situation Report No. 28. Epidemiological Situation of Dengue in the Americas.	https://www.paho.org/es/documentos/informe-situacion-no-28-situacion-epidemiologica-dengue-americas-semana-epidemiologica

Summary of Changes

Are you changing the timeframe of the operation	Yes
Are you changing the operational strategy	No
Are you changing the target population of the operation	Yes
Are you changing the geographical location	No
Are you making changes to the budget	No
Is this a request for a second allocation	No
Has the forecasted event materialize?	Yes

Please explain the summary of changes and justification:

Through this Operations Update No. 1, the Red Cross Society of Panama is requesting a two-month no-cost extension, following a request from the Ministry of Health made during a technical coordination meeting on October 9, 2024.

According to the latest official epidemiological bulletin, the Breteau index in the regions prioritized by this operation is 2.6%, indicating a low risk. However, strengthening preventive and control actions during the summer months, particularly in highly vulnerable areas, such as those with a history of dengue outbreaks, is crucial to mitigate potential increases in dengue transmission in the upcoming seasons.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito can remain in the egg stage, adhered to surfaces, for several months under dry conditions. These eggs can hatch upon contact with water, even after weeks or months. Eliminating these eggs during the dry season is a key strategy to significantly reduce the population of active mosquitoes in the next rainy season, thereby decreasing the risk of dengue transmission.

Additionally, the dry season provides a strategic opportunity to intervene in the mosquito's reproductive cycles, as the absence of



standing water makes it easier to identify and eliminate potential breeding sites, preventing larvae from reaching the adult stage.

With this extension, the operation reach will expand from the initially planned 30,000 people to 60,000 people in the same prioritized geographic areas. The total budget will remain unchanged, but adjustments to budget lines will be made as needed to achieve the new objectives, in compliance with IFRC guidelines. The operational strategy will remain unchanged.

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

09-08-2024



Educational sessions on dengue prevention conducted with children in educational centers. Source: RCSP



Girls painting bags as part of their school kit for dengue prevention. Source: RCSP



Woman receiving a household cleaning kit as part of preventive actions. Source: RCSP

Health

As part of its initial actions, the Red Cross Society of Panama implemented awareness campaigns through social networks, focusing on disseminating key messages about effective dengue prevention practices, how to act upon symptoms of the disease, and preventive measures at home. These messages were aligned with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health.

In addition, the National Society conducted awareness-raising activities in coordination with local authorities and community teams, particularly in the regions of Tierras Altas and Soloy in the province of Chiriquí. These activities were carried out within the framework of the ECHO-PPP project.

Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

As part of the initial response actions, the Red Cross Society of Panama began implementing fumigation days in two host communities and two Temporary Migration Reception Stations (ETRM) in the province of Darién. These activities were carried out under the National Society's Migration Project, supported by the agreement with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), and complemented the dissemination of key messages on practical prevention mechanisms in the context of human mobility.

Coordination

At the national level, the Red Cross Society of Panama held an initial meeting with the Ministry of Health, the General Directorate of Public Health, and the regional health directors of the affected areas to explore strategic collaboration aimed at strengthening the comprehensive response to the dengue epidemic. The National Society headquarters maintained ongoing communication and coordination with local committees in the most affected areas prioritized in the Ministry of Health alert. This effort focused on assessing their operational capacity in terms of logistics and personnel, ensuring they had the minimum resources necessary to carry out effective actions against dengue.

National Society Readiness

The Red Cross Society of Panama consistently monitored the evolution of dengue in the country and began preparing to implement the necessary measures in areas with high dengue rates. This preparation was carried out under the direction of the local committees of the National Society and in alignment with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health, as outlined in the health alert. Internally, staff and local chairmen in the most

	affected areas were organized to ensure an effective response, including updating information from previous interventions and identifying needs at the local level. Additionally, local initiatives were implemented to disseminate key messages and promote dengue prevention practices.
National Society EOC	The EOC of the Red Cross Society of Panama monitored the dengue situation in the country through internal and external sources. Additionally, it organized and shared relevant information with the National Society authorities to facilitate decision-making. This information was also made available to all members of the National Society.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	The IFRC, through the Country Cluster Delegation for Central America, has provided direct guidance in the planning of this IFRC-DREF application. In addition, the different technical areas of the delegation provide continuous support for the monitoring and implementation of the operation. In addition, the IFRC Regional Office for the Americas has been providing extra support to assist the different components linked to the emergency when necessary.
Participating National Societies	The American, Italian, Swedish, and Spanish Red Cross Societies are present in the country but are not involved in the implementation of the actions planned for this operation.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

	The International Committee of the Red Cross is present in the country but is not involved in the implementation of the actions planned for this operation.
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Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	<p>To address the increase in dengue cases, the Ministry of Health, the Caja de Seguro Social (CSS), and other health institutions established a coalition to promote a more comprehensive and coordinated response. At the CSS, action plans were implemented at its health facilities to manage the increasing number of recently reported cases. These efforts aimed to ensure the best possible care for affected patients. Additionally, the population was urged to seek medical attention if they experienced symptoms such as fever with headache, pain behind the eyes, mucosal bleeding, blood in the urine, skin lesions, fainting, or severe abdominal pain.</p> <p>On Thursday, August 8, an intersectoral and inter-institutional team, under the direction of the Ministry of Health, carried out an operation in the village of Las Garzas. During this event, the population was reminded of the importance of allowing the teams to conduct inspections, collect garbage, and eliminate breeding sites in residences and commercial premises, among other locations. Recommendations were also made to eliminate any containers that could accumulate water, such as pots, bottles, cans, and unused tires, and to ensure that reserve containers were well-covered and clean to prevent the reproduction of the Aedes aegypti mosquito.</p>
UN or other actors	The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) continues to serve as a direct link with the Public Health and Epidemiology Directorate of the Ministry of Health, which is responsible for monitoring dengue cases across the country.



Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The entities of the National Health System, together with local, national, and international organizations involved in the response to the dengue emergency, held coordinated meetings. The objective was to harmonize efforts, optimize the use of available resources, and avoid duplication of actions to effectively combat the dengue outbreak.

These coordinated efforts have enabled all entities and organizations to currently implement actions in a coordinated and sectorized manner.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



In the face of the dengue emergency in Panama, critical public health management needs are identified to mitigate the impact of the disease, based on reports from the Red Cross Society of Panama health committee and directives from the Ministry of Health, consolidated during a key meeting on August 8, 2024.

Key gaps include the need for effective coordination between different levels of health care within the Ministry of Health to manage the increase in dengue cases. This increase, exacerbated by factors such as population density, poor housing infrastructure, inadequate waste management, and the rainy season, raises the risk of gastrointestinal, dermatological, respiratory, and, especially, vector-borne diseases. This can trigger epidemiological outbreaks with serious consequences for vulnerable groups. In addition, the accumulation of stagnant water provides a favorable environment for the transmission of vector-borne diseases (arbovirosis), highlighting the importance of community education in the identification and elimination of mosquito breeding sites and the promotion of prevention practices. It also stresses the need to strengthen response capacity through training in dengue pathology, including its life cycle, signs and symptoms, treatments, and prevention and control measures. Dissemination of this information is essential, especially in communities and among local and educational leaders, to facilitate a deeper understanding and better management of the health emergency. Finally, there is a crucial need to provide basic resources, such as gloves, garbage bags, and cleaning supplies for laundry rooms, among others, to vulnerable families. This is essential to facilitate the adoption of safe and effective dengue prevention and control practices.



There is a need to strengthen vector control coordination with the Ministry of Health, which is essential to improve access to safe water and reinforce hygiene practices, including hand washing and effective waste management.

Another important gap is the capacity of communities to identify and eliminate mosquito breeding sites, which requires substantial improvement in waste management and collection based on the particular characteristics of the communities. The lack of adequate personal protective equipment for volunteers who carry out cleanup campaigns in homes and green areas also represents an urgent need.

In addition, there is a need for logistical support in the Ministry of Health spraying campaigns to reduce the adult *Aedes aegypti* mosquito population, including the provision of fuel for thermonebulizers. This support is crucial to extend the reach of interventions in affected communities and to strengthen educational initiatives on dengue prevention.



For effective dengue prevention and management in the country, it is critical to integrate protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) considerations to ensure equitable access to prevention and care for all people. It is necessary to recognize and address the needs of vulnerable groups, who may face significant barriers due to inadequate housing conditions and limited access to water and sanitation.

There are gaps in incorporating a PGI approach in dengue prevention strategies, which is essential to actively include diverse demographic groups such as pregnant women, children, adolescents, the elderly, people with disabilities, and members of ethnic and LGBTBIQ+ groups in decision-making and implementation of preventive measures.

Another important gap lies in the adaptation of dengue prevention and control strategies to the specific needs of vulnerable populations, ensuring that prevention practices are culturally sensitive and that health services are accessible to all.



Finally, there is a need for sensitization and ongoing training on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PEAS) policy for volunteers who conduct field interventions, ensuring their commitment to and understanding of PGI policies.



Community Engagement And Accountability

There is a significant gap in the active participation of communities in the implementation and monitoring of dengue prevention and control strategies. This gap manifests itself in the need to foster more participatory decision-making, ensuring that the voices of communities are heard and considered in the formulation and implementation of programs and strategies. In addition, there is a need to develop clear and transparent accountability mechanisms, allowing health authorities and the Red Cross Society of Panama to report to communities on the progress and results of interventions, which in turn builds trust and cooperation.

Another important need is the strengthening of local capacities for effective dissemination of contextualized information, identification of mosquito breeding sites, and promotion of preventive practices against dengue.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

The Red Cross Society of Panama has not identified any gaps or limitations that could cause significant disruptions or delays in the implementation of the proposed actions. Fluent communication has been maintained with the Ministry of Health as well as with other organizations present in the areas most affected by dengue, which ensures efficient inter-institutional coordination.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this IFRC-DREF allocation, the Red Cross Society of Panama aims to contribute to the national response to the prevention of dengue by supporting the emergency needs of 60,000 people in the areas of health, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI), and community engagement and accountability (CEA) in 8 townships in the country for six months.

Operation strategy rationale

Dengue prevention is a public health priority in Panama due to the constant threat posed by this mosquito-borne disease. In this context, the Red Cross Society of Panama continues to work closely with the Ministry of Health, utilizing epidemiological reports to assess the most affected communities and prioritize specific intervention areas using IFRC-DREF funds.

The Red Cross Society of Panama's response strategy is designed to be effective and sustainable, combining multiple interconnected actions implemented in collaboration with national and local authorities. This includes leveraging workspaces established by the National Society's local branches in the most affected areas. The implementation of the IFRC-DREF, which will run for six months, will focus on reducing *Aedes aegypti* larval indices, the presence of the vector, and the incidence of dengue cases, with special attention to families in the most affected communities.

Initially, the National Society planned to reach 30,000 people, but with the newly approved two-month extension, it will now target 60,000 people in the same geographic areas. This expansion will primarily be achieved through vector control activities, particularly fumigation efforts under the WASH sector. The National Society will maintain the same number of staff and volunteers to complete the operational activities effectively.

The proposed strategy focuses on the following sectors and specific actions:

HEALTH

The objective is to reach 8,750 people through the implementation of various health-focused activities aimed at strengthening dengue prevention and promoting safe practices within communities. These activities will include awareness campaigns in educational centers and the distribution of school kits specially designed to prevent dengue, emphasizing the importance of combating this disease. Each school participating in the workshops will receive a school kit as a prevention support tool.

Additionally, the National Society will offer training to staff and volunteers participating in the operation. The training will cover essential topics such as the mosquito life cycle, signs and symptoms of dengue, treatments, prevention, vector control, and self-protection measures. This will enable staff and volunteers to effectively transmit this knowledge to other communities.



Awareness campaigns will also be conducted through digital media and community fairs to inform the population about preventive measures, signs and symptoms of the disease, and the importance of seeking early medical intervention. These actions will be planned and validated participatively with the communities to ensure that the developed materials are relevant and meet their current informational needs while considering their perception of dengue and the specific context.

WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

The objective is to reach 60,000 people (12,000 families) through a series of WASH-related activities. These will include 10 community clean-up campaigns and house-to-house visits to raise awareness about vector control measures and the identification and elimination of mosquito breeding sites, in collaboration with Ministry of Health staff. Family kits for dengue prevention will also be distributed. Additionally, 15 community talks will focus on dengue prevention, breeding site elimination, and the importance of maintaining safe water and hygiene. Furthermore, safe water storage containers will be provided to 500 families (2 per family).

All these activities will be carried out in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health, which will handle the necessary fumigations. The Red Cross Society of Panama will contribute by purchasing fuel for the thermal foggers, thereby expanding the coverage of fumigation campaigns. The frequency of the campaigns, home visits, and fumigations will be determined once field activities begin to ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

Specific points will be established for the clean-up campaigns, where tarpaulins will be used to disseminate key messages and distribute informational materials using loudspeakers. Additionally, personal protective equipment (gloves, safety goggles, rubber boots) will be purchased to ensure volunteer safety. Continuous home visits will be essential to confirm that mosquito breeding sites have been effectively eradicated, aligning with the Ministry of Health's surveillance system.

PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION (PGI)

Awareness sessions will be conducted for volunteers and staff on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policies (PSEA), which will include signing the policy, with special emphasis on child protection and community-level safeguarding. Additionally, specific PGI guidelines will be developed to guide the implementation of the actions under this IFRC-DREF.

Given the school-level activities, the Red Cross Society of Panama previously conducted a child protection risk analysis aligned with the IFRC's Global Child Protection Policy. Tailored awareness messages will also be created for different population groups, including children and adults, and tools will be used to assess the level of dengue knowledge among these groups.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA)

Post-distribution surveys will be conducted as a feedback mechanism to strengthen the National Society's accountability system. This will include activating feedback channels, such as an operation-specific phone line to handle complaints. Additionally, training sessions will be developed for National Society staff and volunteers on CEA topics, highlighting mechanisms relevant to the actions implemented under this IFRC-DREF. These sessions will reach 100 volunteers and will be conducted in five sessions.

A specific CEA strategy will also be developed for this intervention. This strategy will include technical support for participatory validation of messages and information, as well as adapting topics to the current needs of the community context.

STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL SOCIETY

To execute this operation, the Red Cross Society of Panama will initially mobilize 100 volunteers. However, it is prepared to increase this number if the context evolves and the situation in affected areas demands it. While the organization has vehicles available in local committees, it will rent a 15-passenger bus to facilitate personnel mobilization.

Two additional professional roles (1 financial manager and 1 operational assistant) will be hired to support the implementation of the actions outlined in this IFRC-DREF request. Additionally, four technical volunteers will remain active for 60 days, given the complexity of operating simultaneously in three different provinces.

As part of visibility and uniformity measures, the National Society will purchase visibility items for volunteers, such as T-shirts, water bottles, and pens with the organization's emblem. All necessary expenses for mobilization and food for staff and active volunteers will be covered, and accommodation will be provided if needed.

Area managers and technical coordinators from the National Society headquarters will conduct periodic monitoring visits to address the needs and concerns of staff and volunteers directly.

Finally, a lessons-learned workshop will be held at the conclusion of the operation. This event will be essential for collecting valuable insights that the National Society will use to plan, implement, and monitor future operations, ensuring continuous improvement in its interventions.

The National Society will continue ongoing coordination with government authorities and other organizations on the ground, working



closely with the Ministry of Health. This collaboration is crucial to strengthening the response and providing the best possible humanitarian assistance to those most in need.

Additionally, the National Society will hold regular follow-up meetings with representatives of the IFRC Central America Cluster Delegation. These meetings, part of accountability mechanisms, aim to ensure constant monitoring of the actions carried out.

It is important to highlight that, through the Pilot Programmatic Partnership Project (ECHO-PPP), awareness-raising actions have been coordinated in Chiriquí Province, and fumigation activities for vector control are being implemented with support from the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF). The intervention zones under this IFRC-DREF have been carefully selected by the Ministry of Health and differ from the areas mentioned above. This planning ensures complementarity of actions rather than duplication, optimizing resources and efforts in the most critical areas in response to dengue cases nationwide.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

According to the health alert issued by the Ministry of Health, the Red Cross Society of Panama has identified the communities of Las Garzas and 24 de Diciembre in Panama Metro; Pacora and Chepo in Panama East; Cristóbal and Cativá in Colón; and Burunga and Arraján in Panama West, as the areas with the highest incidence of dengue cases. These areas total 501,651 people at risk.

In response, the National Society has internally assessed its capacities and the funds available through the IFRC-DREF, concluding that it can provide adequate assistance to 60,000 people in these affected areas.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

While the Red Cross Society of Panama is committed to providing support to all people in need, it will prioritize its assistance to high-risk and vulnerable groups. This includes the elderly, children and adolescents, pregnant women, and those with pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or heart disease, who are more susceptible to serious complications from dengue.

Total Targeted Population

Women	25,800	Rural	80%
Girls (under 18)	4,395	Urban	20%
Men	25,400	People with disabilities (estimated)	5%
Boys (under 18)	4,405		
Total targeted population	60,000		

Risk and Security Considerations

Please indicate about potential operation risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Interruption of field activities due to heavy rains	Establish a flexible schedule that allows rescheduling or adjusting planned actions. In addition, it is important to develop effective communication strategies to inform all involved about changes or alternative actions in a timely manner.
Contagion of mosquito-borne diseases to staff and volunteers	Ensure the constant use of approved and effective insect repellents among volunteers and staff. Additionally, the use of appropriate protective clothing, such as long-sleeved shirts, should be promoted to reduce skin exposure to mosquito bites.



Changing outbreak dynamics

Design response plans that adapt to changes in dengue outbreak dynamics. This requires the identification of key indicators and triggers that allow the activation of different phases of the response as the outbreak situation evolves, ensuring agile and appropriate action.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

The implementation of actions in areas classified as high risk may expose staff and volunteers to clashes with violent groups or theft situations. To mitigate these risks, the Red Cross Society of Panama is committed to ensuring safer access and maintaining effective operational security in the field. In addition, the National Society will take steps to ensure that both staff and volunteers are easily identifiable through the use of clearly marked uniforms. This not only improves security but also strengthens the visibility and legitimacy of the operation in these critical areas.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

Planned Intervention



Budget: CHF 126,948

Targeted Persons: 8,750

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of people reached through educational talks and distribution of school kits for dengue prevention.	8,750	6,219
Number of schools that received school kits.	65	50
Number of dengue awareness fairs held.	10	9
Number of volunteers and staff trained on dengue-related topics.	100	104

Progress Towards Outcome

A total of 100 talks have been conducted in educational centers with practical information on dengue prevention. Each session focused on equipping students with the knowledge to mitigate the spread of the disease. Additionally, 26 talks are currently in progress and are expected to be completed by December 15.

As part of the educational outreach, 6,219 school kits have been distributed to students participating in these talks. Each kit contains activity books, stickers illustrating dengue prevention measures, colored pencils, and other educational materials designed to reinforce awareness and understanding of the disease. The distribution of an additional 2,531 kits is underway and will be finalized by December 15.

To support schools in maintaining environments free of mosquito breeding sites, 50 dengue prevention kits have been delivered to educational centers. Each kit includes garbage bags, disposable gloves, gardening gloves, two rakes, and soap for handwashing. The delivery of 15 more kits is scheduled to conclude by December 15.

Six training sessions have been held for National Society volunteers and staff, equipping 104 participants with essential knowledge on



topics such as the mosquito life cycle, the disease cycle, signs and symptoms, treatment, prevention, and vector control. These sessions enhance the capacity of volunteers and staff to effectively carry out dengue prevention activities. An additional training session tailored for Youth Agency volunteers is scheduled for December to boost their participation in the coming months.

A digital awareness campaign has been launched using the National Society's social media platforms, such as Instagram, and WhatsApp groups. This campaign disseminates vital information on dengue, including its signs, symptoms, and prevention measures, ensuring a wide reach across diverse audiences. To further amplify its impact, radio spots are set to launch in December, targeting broader community engagement.

Nine awareness fairs have been organized in various high-risk locations, such as Omar Park in Panama City, Ricardo J. Alfaro School, Calle 50, Casco Antiguo, Policentro Chepo, Buena Vista Colón, and Colón. These fairs provided the affected population with information on dengue prevention, symptoms, and the importance of seeking early medical attention, reinforcing community-level control measures. Two additional fairs are planned for December 14 at the Minsa Capsi in Burunga and December 21 in the West Panama Region.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 215,024

Targeted Persons: 60,000

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of people reached through dengue prevention actions (including community talks and home visits).	60,000	28,255
Number of families that received family kits for dengue prevention.	12,000	5,651
Number of families that received tanks for safe water storage.	500	0
Number of community clean-up campaigns carried out.	15	6
Number of volunteers and personnel equipped with personal protective equipment.	100	100

Progress Towards Outcome

Six community cleanup campaigns have been successfully organized, actively involving community residents in the elimination of waste and potential mosquito breeding sites. These efforts have fostered community engagement and raised awareness about the importance of maintaining clean environments. Additionally, four more cleanup campaigns are being coordinated for December and January 2025, ensuring the continuity of these impactful initiatives.

To facilitate and promote participation in the community cleanup campaigns, five awnings and five loudspeakers were acquired. These tools have improved the organization and visibility of the campaigns, encouraging greater involvement from local residents.

As part of the intervention, 5,651 families (28,255 people) have received family dengue prevention kits. These kits, which include 12 garbage bags, 2 pairs of rubber gloves, 1 broom, and 2 cleaning cloths, provide families with the necessary tools to maintain clean and safe home environments. An additional 6,349 kits are scheduled for distribution in December and January, expanding the reach and impact of this initiative.

Collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MINSa) has been a cornerstone of the operation. Through this partnership, mosquito breeding sites have been systematically identified and eliminated, enhancing vector control in affected areas. This ongoing collaboration ensures a coordinated and effective approach to reducing the mosquito population.

A total of 29 home monitoring visits have been conducted, where volunteers engaged directly with families to raise awareness of vector control measures and promote the implementation of preventive strategies. In coordination with MINSa, additional home visits are



planned for December and January 2025 to further reinforce community education on dengue prevention.

In January 2025, the National Society plans to conduct 15 community talks focused on dengue prevention, the elimination of breeding sites, and the importance of maintaining safe drinking water and proper hygiene. These sessions aim to educate community members on effective practices to mitigate dengue-related risks and strengthen public health knowledge.

Additionally, the distribution of 1,000 water storage tanks (2 per family) is scheduled for January, ensuring families have access to safe water sources that do not contribute to mosquito breeding. The tanks are expected to arrive by mid-December, enabling timely distribution.

To ensure the safety and effectiveness of its volunteers during field activities, the National Society has procured personal protective equipment for 100 volunteers. This includes gloves, goggles, and rubber boots, allowing them to carry out their tasks with the necessary safety measures in place.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 4,154

Targeted Persons: 2,000

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of people reached through awareness-raising messages tailored to different population groups.	2,000	1,000
Number of volunteers and staff who have been trained in the PEAS policy and have signed the implementation commitment.	100	104

Progress Towards Outcome

To promote a culture of safety and respect, five sensitization sessions on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy (PEAS) were conducted. These sessions included a comprehensive explanation of the policy, fostering understanding among volunteers and staff about their responsibilities. As a tangible commitment to uphold these standards, participants signed a pledge, reinforcing their dedication to maintaining a safe and respectful environment in all interactions.

Recognizing the importance of tailoring educational materials to different audiences, specific awareness-raising messages for children were developed in the form of bookmarks. These messages are designed to engage and educate young learners effectively. In addition, new messages are being created for adult groups participating in community talks, ensuring that the information provided is relevant, accessible, and impactful for each demographic.

To evaluate the effectiveness of these educational efforts, a specialized evaluation tool is being used to measure the level of knowledge about dengue among children and adults. This tool helps assess the impact of the information campaigns and identify areas where educational strategies may need adjustments, ensuring continuous improvement in community engagement and understanding.

To further strengthen the operation inclusivity and protection measures, specific PGI guidelines were developed for the implementation of this IFRC-DREF. These guidelines ensure that all activities incorporate minimum PGI standards, promoting equitable participation and safeguarding the dignity and rights of all individuals involved.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 8,094

Targeted Persons: 600



Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of post-distribution surveys completed.	600	150
Number of volunteers and staff who have participated in talks on CEA-related topics.	100	0

Progress Towards Outcome

To evaluate the impact of the interventions, 150 post-distribution surveys have been conducted. These surveys provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and reception of the actions carried out, enabling the National Society to identify strengths and areas for improvement in real time.

As part of its commitment to accountability, a dedicated hotline has been established to handle complaints related to the operation. This accessible and efficient channel ensures that community members can voice concerns, provide feedback, and seek resolution for any issues encountered, reinforcing trust and responsiveness.

In December, six specialized talks are scheduled for National Society staff and volunteers, focusing on key CEA principles and their application within the scope of the IFRC-DREF dengue operation. These sessions will emphasize the importance of using appropriate engagement mechanisms tailored to the specific needs and contexts of the affected communities.

To guide these efforts, specific CEA guidelines have been developed for the operation. These guidelines ensure that all communication and engagement strategies are aligned with the objectives of the intervention and address the unique needs of the communities served.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 10,970

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of field visits completed.	4	0

Progress Towards Outcome

The monitoring visit is scheduled for January 2025 and is planned to include representatives from the technical areas involved (Salud, CEA, etc.) in the implementation of this IFRC-DREF. Additionally, it is anticipated that the Senior PMER Officer will facilitate the lessons learned workshop



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 55,806

Targeted Persons: 100

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
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Number of volunteers and staff equipped with basic visibility elements.	100	100
Number of lessons learned workshops conducted.	1	0

Progress Towards Outcome

Key staff members have been hired to support the implementation of the operation, and 100 visibility kits have been procured and distributed to volunteers and field staff. These kits, which include two long-sleeved sweaters and identification items, ensure that personnel are easily recognizable while enhancing their professional presentation and safety during field activities.

To further enhance the visibility of the operation, informational materials, banners, and other promotional items have been purchased and are actively used across all activities. These materials not only serve to inform communities about the initiative but also reinforce the importance of dengue prevention efforts and the role of the Red Cross Society of Panama in supporting affected populations.

Looking ahead, a lessons-learned workshop is scheduled for the end of January 2025. This workshop will provide a valuable platform for reflection and evaluation, enabling stakeholders to analyze the successes and challenges of the operation. The outcomes will inform future strategies, ensuring continuous improvement in the National Society capacity to respond effectively to public health emergencies.

About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

The National Society has provided for the purchase of supplies, including visibility equipment and personal protective equipment, for 100 volunteers and staff members active in the operation. In addition, a daily subsistence allowance has been secured to facilitate the execution of all planned activities. Currently 104 volunteers remain in the response. Prior to their active participation, all volunteers received vector control training to ensure effectiveness and safety in their tasks.

To reinforce operational actions, two key people were hired: a financial officer and an operational assistant. The financier is in charge of supervising and managing the operation's budget, ensuring that all expenditures remain within the established limits and are duly justified. On the other hand, the operational assistant is providing essential support in the coordination and planning of daily activities, ensuring their correct execution as planned and making the necessary adjustments. In addition, he is responsible for coordinating all the logistics of the operation, including the transportation, storage and distribution of materials and supplies needed to carry out the activities.

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

Panama offers a large and diversified market, providing the opportunity to access a variety of supplies and services from multiple suppliers. Therefore, all procurement related to this operation will be managed locally by the Red Cross Society of Panama, following the standard procurement procedures established by the IFRC.

It is important to mention that there are acquisitions that are in progress for distribution; the bidding and the repetitive purchase have already been approved, and the National Society is waiting for the supplier to make the corresponding deliveries (water storage tanks and dengue prevention kits for families).

The National Society is equipped with a robust organizational structure that enables it to efficiently manage the procurement, storage, and transportation processes, key elements in the logistics chain of humanitarian operations. It has a specific department within the management body, dedicated exclusively to the procurement of goods and services. In addition, it has implemented rigorous financial procedures and an accounting and auditing control system supervised by the General Management. This system is recognized and used by both Participating National Societies and donors in general. It also has a specific purchasing manual that guides all its transactions.

How will this operation be monitored?

The Red Cross Society of Panama has integrated into its management team a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Officer (PMER), who will be responsible for directing follow-up actions by the National Society's guidelines and the specific requirements of the IFRC-DREF. Reports will be prepared and submitted promptly throughout the operation. In addition, there will be direct support from the IFRC



Central America Cluster Delegation throughout the life of the operation to provide technical support and follow-up in the priority areas of the operation. At the end of the operation, a workshop on lessons learned will be organized using the IFRC methodology.

In addition, the National Society has an accounting department in charge of executing financial resources following the established guidelines and budget. The management of financial resources is aligned with the National Society's by-laws and IFRC guidelines. Expenditures justified during the operation will be limited to those incurred specifically during the four-month duration of the operation, excluding any permanent structural expenses.

Virtual follow-up meetings are held with IFRC, which always provides technical support.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The communication strategy of the Red Cross Society of Panama, in response to the current dengue emergency, is articulated around a comprehensive campaign deployed through social networks and alternative media such as radio spots. The main objective is to inform the community about the auxiliary role of the National Society, highlighting its fundamental principles of Neutrality and Impartiality. In addition, the campaign will include the dissemination of practical advice for the prevention of Dengue.

This campaign, which will be implemented primarily on social media platforms and radio stations, will employ clear and accessible messages to reach both affected populations and society at large. It seeks to foster a deeper understanding of the humanitarian mission of the Red Cross Society of Panama while providing essential prevention guidance that is aligned with Ministry of Health guidelines.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRPA019 - Panama Red Cross Society Panama: Dengue epidemic

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	354.219
Shelter and Basic Household Items	0
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	0
Health	126.948
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	215.024
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	4.154
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	8.094
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	66.776
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	10.970
National Society Strengthening	55.806
TOTAL BUDGET	420.995

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



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[Click here for the reference](#)

