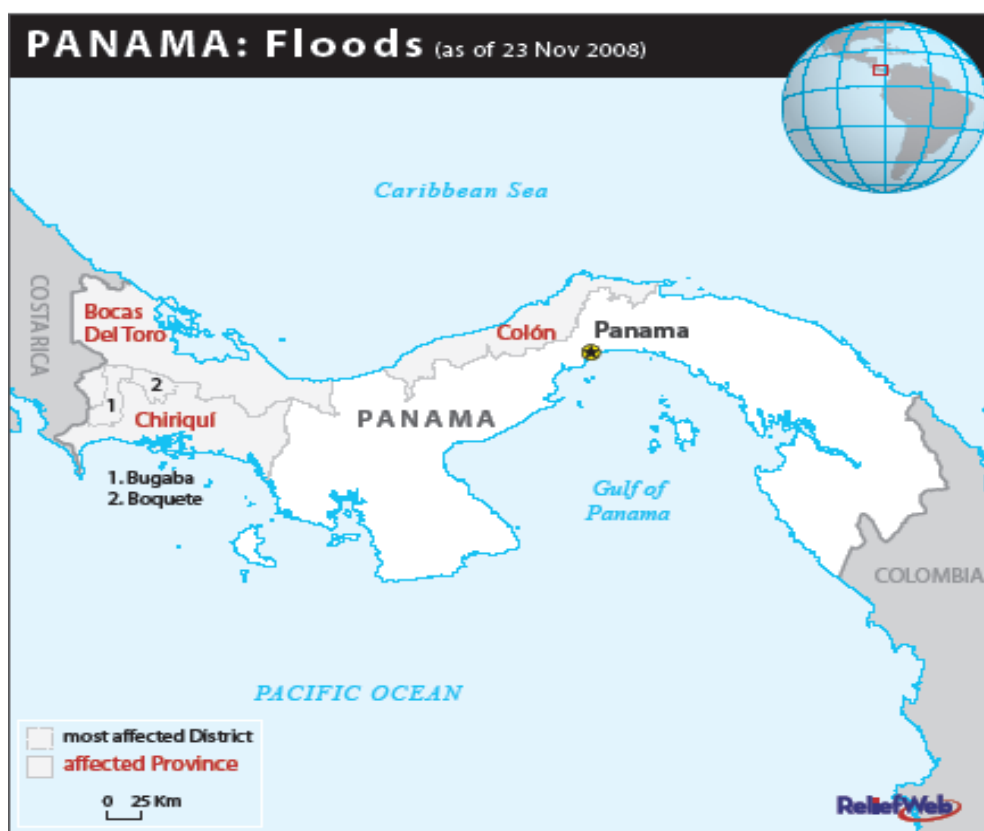


**Situation Report 2 – Panama Floods**  
**10 December 2008**

This situation report is based on information received from the Resident Coordinator, UNETT, the COE, the UNDAC Team and other agencies present in Panama through their Regional Offices.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- As the situation improves, some 560 people still remain in four temporary shelters. Some 23,700 persons were affected and 3,300 houses were damaged or destroyed.
- The total damage caused by the floods is estimated at USD 10 million.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Narrative and statistical source: Gov. of Panama, *Gobierno Nacional continúan dando apoyo y asistencia humanitaria en Bocas del Toro y Chiriquí*. 23 Nov., 2008. Data sources: UNCS, GAUL. Map created 24 Nov., 2008.

**SITUATION**

1. The Government has now declared Bocas del Toro, Comarca Ngobe Bugle and Colon under yellow alert, while Chiriqui is under green alert. Panama had experienced continuous heavy rainfall during November that led to flooding in many parts of the country. The total number of fatalities remains at 10, while the total number of injured still stands at 6. Some 23,700 persons were affected and 3,300 houses were damaged or destroyed.

2. Out of 58 shelters initially set up, only four are still open: 2 in Bocas del Toro and 2 in Panama's northeastern area. The shelters house a total of 560 persons. Roads are not totally safe yet, slowing down relief and recovery efforts. Some affected communities are isolated and continue to be difficult to reach. A number of water wells are contaminated

in some areas and the affected population is at risk of skin, intestinal, respiratory infections and other related water-borne diseases. Eight infrastructure installations were affected as well as 3 warehouses in Chiriqui. Livelihood in farming, banana productions, commerce, and tourism has been severely affected. However, telecommunications and power are fully restored. The total damage is estimated to be USD 10 million.

## RESPONSE

3. The Government's response is coordinated through the National System of Civil Protection ('Sistema Nacional de Protección Civil' - SINAPROC). The National Government continues to collect and dispatch essential relief items through the office of the First Lady and SINAPROC personnel has been distributing blankets, water and food. SINAPROC's warehouse operations continue with a plan to dispatch goods to communities that have not been assisted. The Ministry of Housing assessed some 630 houses in 31 affected communities of Bocas Del Toro and found that a total of 37% of all houses were been totally damaged and 26% are partially damaged.

4. The international response is coordinated by the UN Resident Coordinator, working closely with SINAPROC and other government institutions. All Governmental institutions, as well as Embassies and the civil society, are involved in the relief efforts. The OCHA ROLAC Office is providing coordination support to the UNCT and the UNETT. The UNDAC team, having supported the government in information management and having discussed the transition from response to recovery, completed its mission on 9 December 2008.

5. The UNCT has organized the response as follows: PAHO, UNICEF, IFRC and IOM, under the leadership of PAHO, are working on nutrition, water and sanitation, health, shelters, and camps; WFP is working on food, logistics and communications; and FAO, UNEP, UNDP, under the leadership of UNDP, focus on agriculture, environment and early recovery. UNHCR and UNICEF, led by UNICEF, are working on education and protection.

6. The activities of UN agencies, directly or through partner organizations, as well as other relief organizations and the civil society, have been wide-ranging. WFP activated emergency staff in the field of logistics and information management. WFP distributed high-energy biscuits and donated a warehouse to SINAPROC. It also facilitated a basic workshop on supply chain and warehouse management. UNFPA distributed 22,000 hygiene family kits. UNHCR distributed non-perishable products and provided USD 5,000 worth of other support. UNICEF deployed a regional WASH expert and provided relief items. IFRC allocated CHF 380,000 to respond to the most urgent needs, providing safe water tablets, mosquito nets, food, water, hygiene kits and clothing. UNDP/BCPR will team up with FAO and UNEP for early recovery coordination. UNDP has made available USD 90,000 for damage assessment, and deployed an expert in recovery and assistance in coordination and rehabilitation. PAHO allocated USD 36,000 for immediate response in health assistance, as well as 5,000 blankets and logistical support staff. PAHO is also assisting the Government in the areas of safe water, surveillance and outbreak control. It will also provide two chlorine plants.

7. OCHA, through Norwegian reserves, provided an emergency cash grant of USD 30,000, to purchase immediate life-saving items to support flood victims. Two helicopters, facilitated by OFDA to distribute goods in isolated areas, have completed their mission. The Spanish International Cooperation for the Development Agency (AECID) donated 14 tons of humanitarian supplies. The goods (blankets, mosquito nets, family kitchen kits, and hygiene family kit) were transported in trucks from their Logistics Center, in Panama city, to David's airport. AECID further donated EURO 45,000 to PAHO. Contributions were also made by the Governments of Japan, Colombia, United States and Germany.

## REGIONAL RESPONSE

8. IFRC launched an emergency appeal for USD 571,953 for both Costa Rica and Panama. The emergency operation will provide affected communities with first aid, food supplies as well as relief items.

9. The OCHA Regional Office in Panama is closely monitoring the situation and is in close contact with the Resident Coordinator and UNETT. More information can be found on Reliefweb at [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int) and REDHUM at



[www.redhum.org](http://www.redhum.org). Humanitarian organizations and donors are encouraged to report all contributions (cash and in-kind) to OCHA's Financial Tracking Service at [fts@reliefweb.int](mailto:fts@reliefweb.int) or through the on-line contribution form at [www.reliefweb.int/fts](http://www.reliefweb.int/fts), where a list of already made contributions is available.

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