

**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE RESIDENT/HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR  
ON THE USE OF CERF GRANTS**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Colombia</b>
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<b>Reporting Period</b>	<b>January – December 2008</b>

**I. Executive Summary**

The need for humanitarian assistance in the Mojana Region and the municipality of Riosucio located in the Department of Chocó exceeded the local government's capacity to respond. Consequently, on 18 December 2007, the Government of Colombia requested emergency assistance from the United Nations to support the national response, especially with water and food supplies and the construction or adaptation of shelters.

The water in supply in the La Mojana Region generally comes from deep wells, but there are not enough water supply systems, especially in rural areas. Existing systems were damaged and contaminated in the flooding. Crops were destroyed and small livestock killed. Although the most affected families were adamant about not wanting to leave their damaged houses for fear of looting, there was a need to ensure adequate shelter to prevent the outbreak of disease caused by the limited access to potable and safe drinking water, as well as waste management systems.

For example, in the municipality of Riosucio, flood levels reached between 1.2 meters and 4 meters, leaving more than 11,000 families were affected and their houses damaged. Waste storage systems and sanitary installations were also compromised. The water supply, normally coming from the collection of rainwater or directly from the rivers, was not suitable for human consumption. Risks, especially to children's health, were aggravated by overcrowding in shelters. Water and food were scarce, hygiene conditions were deficient and the means for disposal of solid waste either insufficient or non-existent.

Initial estimates found some 12,500 (2,500 families) in La Mojana and Chocó were in need. As time went on, it became clear that far more were in need, with more than 23,000 (4,400 families) affected overall.

**Summary of the CERF money requested and received status**

<b>Total amount of humanitarian funding required and received during the reporting year</b>	<b>REQUIRED: RECEIVED:</b>	<b>\$2,026,765 \$1,812,580</b>
<b>Total amount requested from CERF</b>	<b>FUNDS (IN TOTAL REQUESTED):</b>	<b>\$1,812,580</b>
<b>Total amount of CERF funding received by funding window</b>	<b>RAPID RESPONSE: GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,812,580 \$1,812,580</b>

<b>Total amount of CERF funding for direct UN agency / IOM implementation and total amount forwarded to implementing partners</b>	<b>NGOS:</b>	\$1,812,580		
	<b>TOTAL(Must equal the total CERF funding allocated):</b>	\$1,812,580		
<b>Approximate total number of beneficiaries reached with CERF funding (disaggregated by sex/age if possible)</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>under 5 years of age</b>	<b>Female (If available)</b>	<b>Male (If available)</b>
	Shelter: 5,818 Food: 42,575 Water and Sanitation: 23,810	<b>23,827</b>	<b>23,704</b>	<b>24,672</b>
<b>Geographic areas of implementation targeted with CERF funding (please be specific)</b>	Mojana Region in the Caribbean of Colombia and municipality of Riosucio (Department of Chocó)			

## II. Background

Severe rains in 2008 affected 27 of Colombia's 32 departments, with much greater intensity in La Mojana region, located in the country's north Caribbean. Rainfall levels increased between 30 and 40 percent in comparison to the averages registered over the past thirty years. La Niña phenomenon --water cooling of the Pacific Ocean-- intensified the two rainy seasons in 2007, aggravating the situation even more.

In view of the twice yearly occurrence of floods in La Mojana, which is located where two major rivers and their affluents meet, a longer-term solution is necessary. Thus, the funds requested from the CERF's rapid response (RR) window helped to start up the emergency humanitarian assistance while further funding was sought for recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The regions of La Mojana and the lower Chocó Atrato have no sewerage systems, and waste water is managed with septic tanks or dumped directly into rivers. When waters rise, the septic tanks overflow and contaminate the water. The municipalities have not established collection systems, and the population disposes of waste on open ground, burns it, or throws it into the river or the estuaries.

During the emergency, especially in the La Mojana region, many families had to leave their homes, and municipal authorities were using the schools as shelters when they had not suffered major damage to their infrastructure. These schools suspended classes, ended the school year early, or had to move their operations elsewhere.

In response to this emergency, and in close coordination with the Colombian Directorate for Disaster Prevention and Attention (DPAD), the UN Emergency Team undertook fact-finding and needs assessment missions to La Mojana region and determined that significant needs remained unmet across the following sectors: food security; water and sanitation and shelter. As a result, rapid response proposals were developed by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The main focus of attention were populations settled in schools and shelters in rural areas; nursing and pregnant women; families with children below age 5 and older people at high risk of sanitation and health-related threats.

Geographic and thematic prioritisation was established in the framework of the UN Emergency Team and negotiated with the DPAD. Each agency concentrated its activities on specific responses. WFP and Action Against Hunger on the provision of food rations; IOM and CISP on the construction and fitting out of shelters; and UNICEF with Oxfam GB and the Colombian Red Cross on Safe Drinking Water and Basic Sanitation. In the urban areas, working groups of municipal public servers were reinforced in matters of public services management and evaluation of the sanitary situation in schools that frequently are used as shelters. In the rural

areas, they were accompanied in identifying the problems of the communities and establishing viable solutions that incorporate the concept of sustainability.

Priorities were to guarantee water in adequate quantity and quality in the first phase, and subsequently guarantee continuity of the service, once the wells were evaluated and the problems of superficial water contamination resulting from the flooding were solved; ensure food assistance during a 90-day period to targeted beneficiaries, particularly those who lost their crops and small livestock; and fitting out or constructing multi-family shelter solutions for those families who lost their homes and did not get access to shelter through the institutional response. Work also was done in institutional strengthening, using the community and the participation of youths in themes of hygiene education in emergency situations as a working axis. A group of teachers and students from grades 9 and 10 in schools in the project's target municipality was trained, and agencies and implementing NGO partners accompanied them in strengthening their work in benefit of their community, within the framework of Student Social Service.

During the needs assessment of beneficiary communities the following challenges were encountered in terms of project development and settings:

- Most beneficiary flood victims are found in zones that are difficult to access. The main means of communication within the affected region are small and medium sized streams and rivers; municipality centres are distant from the flooded areas.
- The lack and precarious state of services for the population of these isolated regions demand that inhabitants receive assistance in multiple areas and issues. Flood victims suffered from unsatisfied basic needs even before the floods; these needs worsened or increased by flooding.
- The threat of new and continuous rain, kept a level of awareness between project partners and stakeholders, along with the threat of an increasing number of flood victims.

Sectors were prioritised based on the findings of the joint needs assessment. CERF funds enabled agencies to complement governmental response. Rural communities became isolated and very difficult to reach. Agricultural communities were the most affected as they lost their subsistence capacities and became rapidly exposed to the risks related to the precarious water and sanitation conditions, inadequate housing and food insecurity,

### **III. Implementation and results**

#### **1. Coordination and implementation arrangements**

On 7 December 2007, the Government of Colombia requested emergency assistance from the United Nations. Based on this request and the information provided by the Directorate of Disaster Prevention and Response (DPAD), the UNETE proceeded to prepare coordinated response proposals for the most affected zones. IOM, WFP and UNICEF, with support from OCHA, prepared requests for CERF rapid response grants for responding to urgent needs for food, shelter, and water and basic sanitation services. Implementing agencies made field visits to determine jointly the specific needs of the targeted communities, seeking to focus the agencies' responses on the same communities in order to ensure an impact. In addition, the local authorities in charge of emergency response were contacted. International NGOs and the Colombian Red Cross participated in these actions as counterparts. Requests for disaster-response funds to CERF were therefore conducted through UNETE Colombia (UNETT). An inter-agency needs assessment based on joint fact-finding missions was conducted to identify needs, gaps and potential beneficiary population targets.

Since 2006, the UNCT established local criteria for CERF proposals, requiring UN and non-UN implementation arrangements through international NGOs that are part of the IASC/UNETE.

Thus, funds were transferred to IOM, UNICEF and WFP and directly implemented through international NGO partners. The needs assessment identified needs and gaps across other sectors (i.e. housing, health, education, etc.), which were disseminated and shared with other UN agencies and government authorities. Requests were technically approved by UNETE members prior to endorsement of the HC. OCHA facilitated all tasks and decision-making procedures leading to the final requests (i.e. needs assessment, CERF application guidelines, application, monitoring and reporting tasks).

## 2. Project activities and results, including actual beneficiaries

CERF funding for emergency programmes in Colombia benefited some 4,441 families comprising 23,810 persons in 56 rural communities. These figures include a school population of 3,887 students and teachers from the urban areas, who have been able to improve their water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and food conditions through the different activities and actions that were implemented.

UNICEF, WFP and IOM coordinated their projects so as to ensure that WatSan, shelter and food distribution services were mostly delivered to the same communities to increase impact. IOM and CISP, for instance, ensured that the provision of water storage was integrated with the delivery of construction materials; whereas WFP also delivered food in these shelters located in the Sucre's Mojana area.

Coordination was established with local water committees, Acción Comunal Boards, community leaders, and local municipal authorities through the Local Committees for Prevention and Response to Disasters (CLOPADs), integrated by municipal planning offices, municipal secretariats of health, municipal secretariats of education, technical water and sanitation sections of municipal hospitals and departmental- and national-level coordination offices through the Regional Committee for Disaster Prevention and Response (CREPAD) and the Directorate of Disaster Prevention and Response, and the Vice-Ministry of Water and Sanitation.

The municipalities of Sucre and San Benito Abad provided labour for the improvement and adaptation of school sanitary batteries. Training processes were undertaken on themes of hygiene practice improvement in school community sanitary installation management and student social services in water, sanitation and hygiene and public services. The projects made it possible to improve the technical capacities of the areas' relief organisations, especially sectional offices of the Colombian Red Cross in Sucre and Chocó, as well as the Health Social Pastorate in Riosucio, Chocó. The Governor of the Department of Sucre became interested in implementing safe drinking water systems for communities that are vulnerable and affected by the seasonal rains.

In the municipalities of Sucre and San Benito in the Department of Sucre, 3,247 persons were trained as facilitators and community promoters for themes related to hygiene and disaster prevention. The sanitary batteries of the schools that have been used as temporary shelters benefited from adaptation and rehabilitation programmes to address future emergencies and to favour the student population. (Interventions were only implemented in the Department of Sucre). The shortage of sanitary batteries in schools that serve as shelters for affected families during periods of flooding was reduced. Identification of the problems of rural micro water systems, intervention in their improvement and the supply of initial tools helped rural community water committees begin to improve their organisation, administration and operation. In participatory workshops, vulnerable communities began to evaluate the risks to which they are subjected from various natural environmental threats affecting them.

Malnutrition rates were kept below a life-threatening level thanks to the delivery of food assistance. Adequate shelter also prevented the outbreak of disease and enabled families to gain access to housing while they became able once again to recover their damaged houses.

IOM and CISPs directly aided 1,168 families, equivalent to approximately 5,818 persons. The intervention defined a strategy to allow the distribution and accompaniment of the implementation of Shelter Kits to families victimised by the floods and was based on a local rescue technique called "Tambos". The Tambos are wooden structures with specifications of approximately 108 square feet, supported by wood piles that are raised according to the specific needs of each community or to water levels (between 1.6 ft and 6,6 ft). These structures also have adaptations for roofs with a dimension of approximately 129 square feet and can be adjusted to fit water tanks with a capacity of 66 gallons. In addition, construction tools and alternative kitchens with an independent fuel stove were delivered which allowed the cooking and preparation of foods on these described basic structures (Tambos).

### 3. Partnerships

UNICEF partnered with Oxfam GB and the Colombian Red Cross, IOM with CISP and WFP with Action against Hunger (Spain). These counterparts already had participated with UN agencies in the response to the emergency of the first rainy season in April 2007. In addition, together with national authorities, NGOs and other United Nations System agencies, the Advisory Commission on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene was created, and a Flood Response Plan was put together in close collaboration with government authorities. Thus, these projects were implemented within a shared framework, which is a considerable step forward partly made possible thanks to the availability of CERF funds.

Coordination with the GoC and UN agencies allowed CERF funded activities to achieve project goals in a timely manner. thereby allowing agencies and other partners to increase their capacity to work in the field through strengthening of government and NGO relationships. Every agency involved was able to show its technical capacity and expertise in the field, and furthermore develop a complete and multi-partner response to the consequences from flooding in Chocó and La Mojana.

The simultaneity of the actions financed by the CERF and the coordination among the United Nations agencies, implementing NGOs, national and local governments and emergency committees from each municipality were key factors for the timeliness and positive impact of the intervention and achievement of the goals -- the projects actually surpassed their intended coverage goals.

### 4. Gender-mainstreaming

Gender equity was ensured by all projects. Of the total beneficiaries, approximately 49% were women and girls. It is worth mentioning that women also played a significant role in ensuring the adequate appropriation of food and NFIs. Women were mostly responsible for leading the hygiene and safe management of food and water components. Pregnant and lactating women were specifically targeted as beneficiaries of food, water and shelter, therefore ensuring that the most vulnerable families were kept together and that adequate nutritional care was given to this group of women, as well as children under 5 years of age. In addition to the activities implemented with CERF funds, agencies and participating NGO partners complemented their projects with training and educational activities aiming to promote respect for sexual and reproductive rights that are often massively breached during emergencies.

### 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

A Monitoring Committee was established, comprising representatives of UN agencies and their implementing NGO partners. The committee made two field visits and held four work meetings to evaluate the status of implementation, in terms of quantitative and qualitative results.

Where the filters were being installed, not only their use was measured, but also the product, in terms of water quality achieved by comparing the bacteriological quality of water samples before

and after filters were installed. Samples were analysed in the region's Secretariat of Public Health laboratories, and doubts or results outside the normal range were investigated and corrected.

It was necessary to strengthen the municipal working groups in aspects of emergency response in water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and food distribution. The contribution was important in terms of knowledge and introduction to emergency response.

A six-month work plan was established involving youths trained in hygiene and shelter fitting/construction, even though the projects only lasted for three. A first follow-up has been made of the programmed activities and accompaniment provided with technical assistance to improve several aspects of the training process.

With coordination from OCHA, two coordination and monitoring meetings have been held on the activities integrated among the agencies, to establish the real levels of coordination.

## IV. Results

Sector	CERF projects per sector	Amount disbursed	Beneficiaries (by sex/age)	Implementing Partners	Expected Results/Outcomes	Actual results and/or improvements
Shelter IOM	Shelter for flood-affected victims in La Mojana	\$462,422	Total: 5,818 Female: 1,910 Male: 1,988 Children: 1,920	CISP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 5000 beneficiaries in 2 municipalities with a safe place during the emergency.</li> <li>▪ 1000 families with an individual sheltering solution.</li> <li>▪ Reduction of the diseases transmitted by vectors (flies, mosquitoes, lice, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Reduction of snakes bites.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elaborated a plan of purchase, verified suppliers and recruited for the supplies.</li> <li>▪ Coordinated and articulated meetings with the local governments of San Benito Abad y Sucre for the selection of beneficiaries and prioritizing intervention zones.</li> <li>▪ Verified visits and conformed committees of attention and civic support for the implementation process.</li> <li>▪ Delivered kits for single family shelters</li> <li>▪ Implemented single family shelters “Tambos”</li> <li>▪ Purchased and delivered sheets of zinc</li> <li>▪ (1,162 families reached out of a 1,000)</li> </ul>
Food WFP	Food distribution for flood-affected victims in La Mojana	\$982,147	Total: 42,575 Female: 13,977 Male: 14,548 Children: 14,050	AAH Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alleviate the impact of floods on the basic food security of vulnerable populations in four municipalities of La Mojana region.</li> <li>▪ Improve access to basic food needs, household subsistence, and food production of vulnerable rural families affected by the flood in four municipalities of La Mojana region.</li> <li>▪ The targeted population will receive and consume emergency rations to complement their daily nutritional requirements for 80 days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An estimate of 42, 000 persons, in four municipalities, actually received and consume emergency rations for a period of 80 days.</li> <li>▪ Nutrition requirements and health condition in the general population were improved.</li> <li>▪ Still, adverse conditions and constant weather fluctuations results in difficult food access for these vulnerable populations.</li> </ul>

Sector	CERF projects per sector	Amount disbursed	Beneficiaries (by sex/age)	Implementing Partners	Expected Results/Outcomes	Actual results and/or improvements
Water and Sanitation UNICEF	Safe drinking water and Water and Sanitation solutions for flood-affected victims in La Mojana and municipality of Riosucio (Department of Chocó)	\$393,764	Total: 23,810 Female: 7,817 Male: 8,136 Children: 7,857	Oxfam GB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12,500 persons living in the rural areas of the municipalities of San Benito Abad and Sucre-Sucre in the Mojana Region and the municipality of Riosucio (Choco), critically affected by the flood emergency have access to safe drinking water</li> <li>1,800 child and adolescent students and the families sheltered in 6 rural schools in San Benito Abad, Sucre-Sucre and Riosucio adopt hygiene practices and have access to sanitary units and systems for the adequate disposal of solid waste.</li> </ul>	4,441 families comprising 23,810 Personas in 56 rural communities were benefited including a school population of 3,887 students and teachers from the urban areas, who have been able to improve their water, sanitation and hygiene conditions through the different activities and actions that were implemented.



## V. CERF IN ACTION

The provision of shelter materials in the Mojana region helped 1,162 families. The same number received single family shelters as well as complete shelter kits, while an additional 6 families received sheets of zinc.

Although the United Nations system has promoted the kit shelter strategy, it has been the people and families of the Mojana region as co-authors of a strategy through which they have been able to, starting with local technology, generate some important changes when facing the floods as far as essential equipment for the single family shelters.

The strategy was based on the construction of “Tambos”, shelters conceived by the residents of the region, as a unique strategy of defence from the floods. In these dry spaces the family can live and be safeguarded during the floods. The Tambos have reduced spaces in the interior of the homes or of the boundaries that are made on beams or supports allowing the floor to be elevated according to the level of the waters. This strategy conceived by the Mojana people is without a doubt an effective form of confronting the periodic conditions to which they are subjected. The support of CERF resources allowed the implementation of these systems while respecting the autonomous values and culture of the region. They have also guaranteed better equipment that improves the adaptation of these spaces.

The shelter kits delivered with CERF resources increased the construction of these emergency spaces, improved the materials used, delivered tools that made the implementation quicker and more effective, accompanied and technically advised the families while protecting the physical integrity. In short, the shelter kits protected the well-being of people affected by the floods. The single family shelters, saved some families from having to flee the area. Studies show that



there was a higher number of beneficiaries within single family shelter than in those living in community housing and that this allowed the victims to participate more and therefore be part of the solution. On the other hand with the adaptation of single family shelters, knowledge and capacities were established and remain in the area, and beneficiaries strengthened their community through the implementation process that ultimately reinforced a sense of ownership.

