

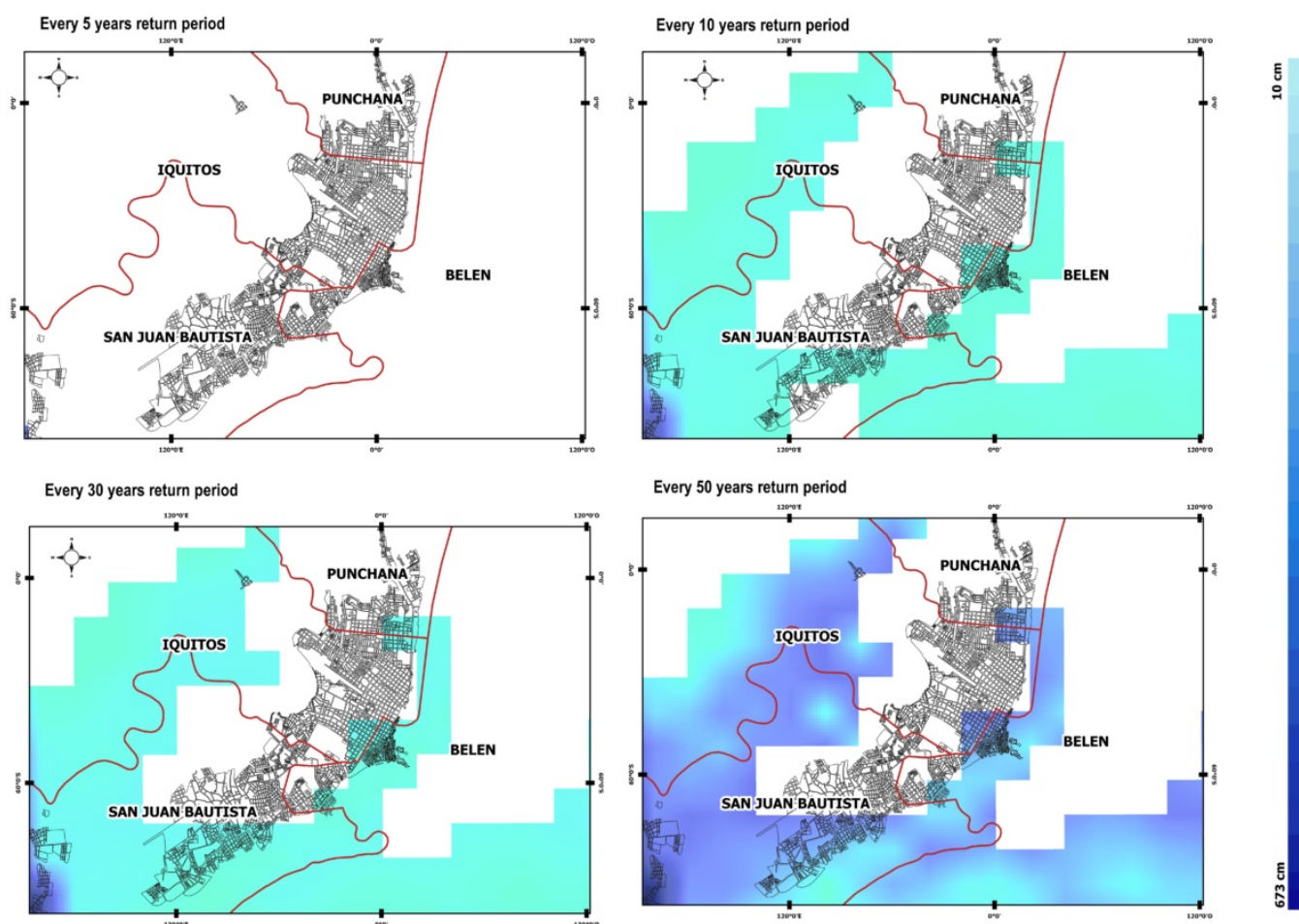
Step 6: Define hazard magnitudes

FbF provides funding for early action for events of a strength and magnitude that has caused significant humanitarian impact in the past; it focuses on extreme events and not, for example, on annual floods that are better addressed by other interventions. One way of measuring the magnitude of the event is the return period.

In this step, past hydrometeorological data should be gathered and used to build a picture of the climate. This historical data is used to understand what is normal for each location and what is unusual or “extreme”.

This historical data can be used to calculate the return period of the most extreme events. The return period provides the probability of an extreme event happening in a given year.

However, return periods are often misinterpreted: the correct definition of a 1-in-5-year rainfall event, for example, is the amount of rainfall that has a 20 percent chance of being exceeded in any given year. It is entirely possible to observe a 1-in-5-year event in two consecutive years, or even in the same year.



Return period maps – showing distribution of inundated area (not necessarily impact on people) for events at increasingly rare occurrence levels – related to magnitude of inundation.

