



# UNICEF Belize

## Humanitarian Situation Report #1



CURRENT SITUATION IN NUMBERS

## Situation Overview and Highlights

Belize City has been the area most affected in the country as an area of low pressure passing over the region has been dumping large amounts of water in the area since Friday evening, October 16, 2015.

Flooding has placed the city at a standstill with emergency management organizations working on evacuating affected residents.

Ten inches of fallen rain has been reported in Belize City since Friday and more rain is expected well into Tuesday, October 20. The weather forecast foresees that the weather will start clearing up by Wednesday.

The Prime Minister of Belize Hon. Dean Barrow and the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) held a press conference Sunday at 1:30 pm to address issues related to the weather affecting the region.

Despite extensive flooding in Belize City, NEMO has not declared a state of emergency or disaster in the city and the situation is being monitored as emergency management organizations are addressing the current situation.

Initial reports say 252 individuals have been displaced and six shelters have opened in Corozal, Orange Walk and Belize Districts.

Schools are closed in Corozal, Orange Walk and Belize and an approximate number of 63.896 children in primary and secondary school are affected.

Based on the available information the urgent needs are currently covered by the Government. BCO is continuously assessing the situation to, based on existing LTAs, be able to rapidly provide humanitarian response.

UNICEF Belize is coordinating an UN Emergency Team meeting this afternoon.

All UNICEF staff and dependents are safe and accounted for.

19 October 2015

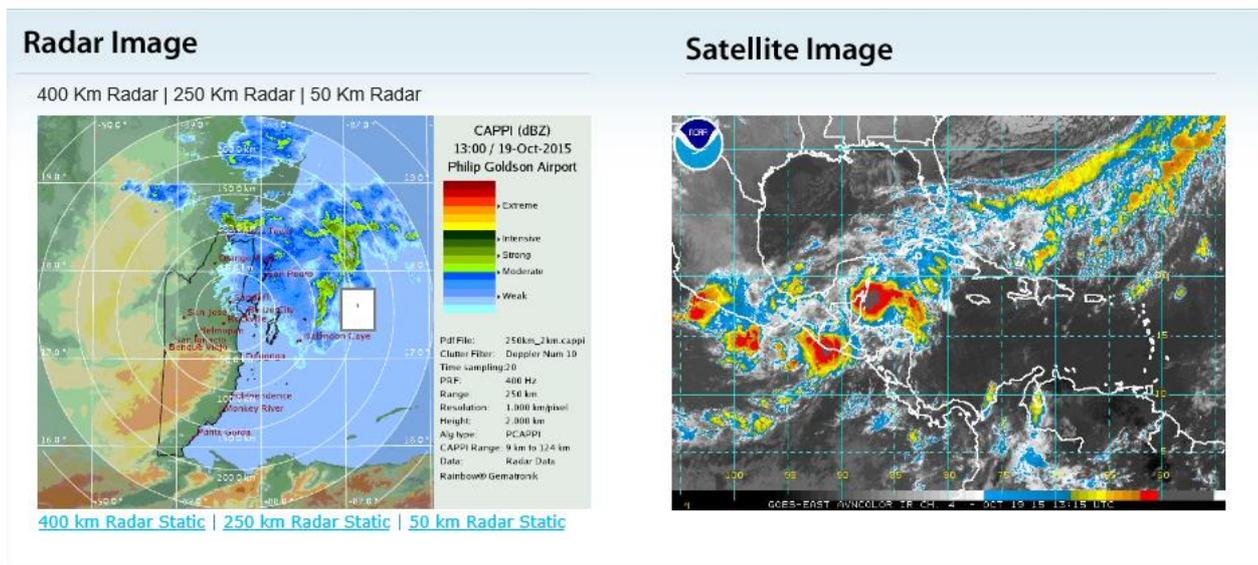
**252**  
individuals in shelters

**63.896 (approx.)**  
children out of school



# Current situation

An area of low pressure located inland over south eastern Mexico just West of Villahermosa is producing disorganized showers and thunderstorms. The system is moving slowly westward and development is unlikely since the low is no longer expected to emerge over water. Moist and unstable conditions will produce more showers but the country should experience improvement in the weather by Thursday. The forecast is for periods of scattered showers.



## Areas Affected

Official reports indicated the Belize, Orange Walk and Corozal Districts are experiencing heavy rains and as a result many of the low laying areas are affected by flooding. Some 252 individuals were displaced to some 8 shelters in the Corozal, Orange Walk and Belize Districts.



## EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education reports that schools will be closed in Corozal, Orange Walk and Belize rural along the Old northern highway. Approximate number of children enrolled in the primary and secondary schools:

Location	School	Approximate No. of children not in school
Belize City	All	30,106
Belize Rural	Old northern road, Sand Hill and Ladyville	9,924
Orange Walk District	All	12,567
Corozal District	All	11,299

## HEALTH

Ministry of Health (MoH) has issued a warning that illegal electrical wiring can be deadly.

### Flooded areas

MoH has also advised children and adults not to wade through flood waters in order to avoid an outbreak of water borne disease. The public is asked to be wary of crocodiles and snakes. A crocodile was caught close to the Belize City hospital, and several Boa constrictors have been seen and caught in the city.

### Drinking water

MoH is asking the people who are not drinking bottled water to:

- ✓ Boil water for at least one minute and cool before drinking;
- ✓ Or use 8 drops of chlorax or bleach to one gallon of water, stir it well before drinking it.

The Ministry of Health has informed that it will be doing larviciding and vector control activities when the water goes down.

## SHELTERS

Several shelters have opened across the country:

District	Location		# of people in shelter
Belize	Belize City	ITVET	80
		YWCA	27
Orange Walk	San Jose	San Jose Community Center	60
	San Estevan	San Estevan Community Centre	48
Corozal		Guadalupe R.C	16
		Mary Hill	6
San Pedro		hotel	3
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>252</b>

Report from The National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) indicates Food packages have been administered to all shelters, and all shelter inhabitants are fed.

## LOGISTICS

### ROAD CONDITIONS

#### **NEMO reports the following road conditions:**

- The Sarteenja - Chunozx road is under 6 inches of water.
- Gracie Rock water is 2ft above road and is impassable and closed to vehicular traffic.
- Hopkins /Sittee River roads is flooded and passable.
- Maskall road is flooded but passable and in some areas the road is washed out and poorly lit.
- Sarteneja road is flooded but passable ONLY to LARGE vehicles.
- White Ridge Road leading to Gales Point is flooded but passable to large vehicle



Impassable Sarteneja Road (Courtesy CTV 3)

### RIVER CONDITIONS

The Belize River is rising and residents of Grace Bank; St. Paul's Bank; Willows Bank; Double Head Cabbage; Bermudian Landing; Isabella Bank; Flowers Bank; May Pen; Burrell Boom; Lord's Bank and Ladyville are asked to observe and make the necessary preparations.

People living along the Macal and Mopan rivers must remain vigilant as the waters head downstream is likely to cause flooding.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

NEMO has deployed emergency prepacked food, water, cleaning supplies and hygiene kits yesterday to Belize City Emergency Management Organization (CEMO) additional supplies being provided this morning.

#### **Future Intension**

The Government of Belize has not declared a national disaster, however they have indicated based on the initial damage assessment to be conducted by NEMO this morning; that they will make a decision on the way forward.

NEMO, presently have field assessment teams deployed in the Belize District (Belize City and Belize River Valley Area), Orange Walk District (San Estevan and San Jose Villages), and the Corozal District (Altamira, Chula vista, Chunox, Progreso and Sarteneja Area). Main priority for the Government of Belize is the restoration of basic needs, schools, and health facilities for the families that were affected by the damage of the flooding.

NEMO has informed the general public that even though the weather is improving in some parts of the country, the main concern is the water that's heading down river which is likely to cause the Mopan and Belize Rivers to flood.

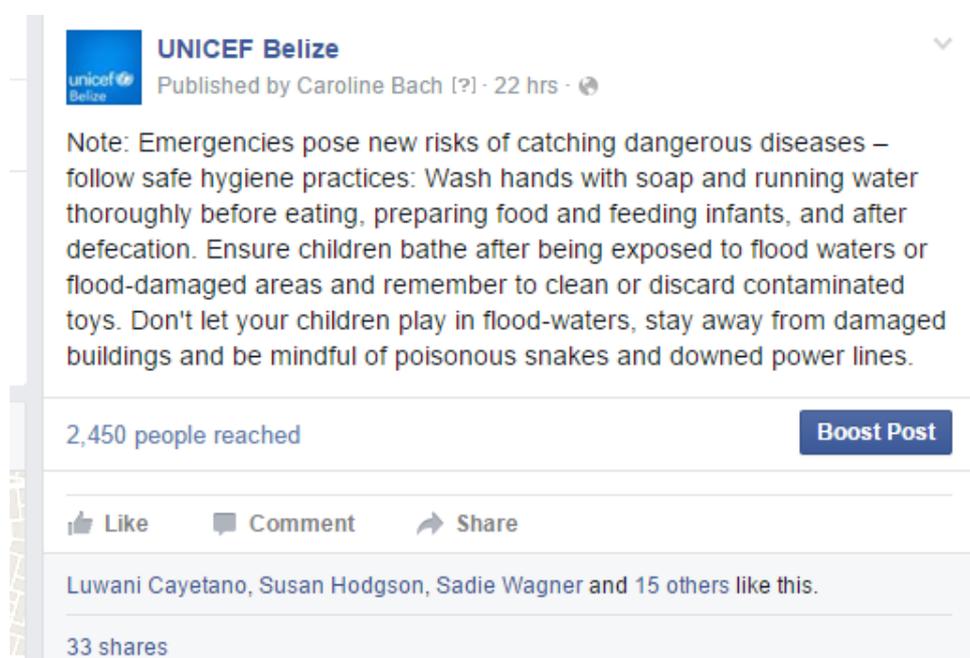
## UNICEF staff and possible Humanitarian Response

Based on the available information the urgent needs are currently covered by the Government. BCO is continuously assessing the situation and, based on previous LTAs, be able to rapidly provide humanitarian response. UNICEF Belize is coordinating an UN Emergency Team meeting this afternoon.

All UNICEF staff and dependents are counted for.

## Media and External Communication

UNICEF Belize has issued an emergency note on Facebook on Sunday night and it was shared on a widely accessible group and has reached 2,450 people and had 33 shares so far. The note was responding to the worrying trend of children bathing in the flood waters and was an overall note on health and safety:



UNICEF communication team will be on standby with any information important information to be shared, and have a set of key messages prepared for distribution.

Next SitRep: Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>.

### Who to contact for further information

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