

# DREF operation



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Belize: Tropical Storm Arthur

DREF operation n° MDRBZ001  
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4 June, 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

**CHF 90,000 (USD 85,715 or EUR 55,317) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society of Belize in delivering immediate assistance to some 2,500 beneficiaries. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** Torrential rainfall produced by Tropical Storm Arthur has affected all districts of Belize. Approximately 10,000 people are affected and seven people are reported dead. Belize's Prime Minister has declared all of Stann Creek District and parts of Belize District disaster areas. The Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) is supporting the government in the common shelters. It also provides support by conducting assessments in the affected areas. DREF funding will support initial response actions that include distributions of non-food items and food as well as assessments.



Floods in Southern Belize.  
Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

This DREF Bulletin entails information from a preliminary Plan of Action developed by the Belize Red Cross Society. More detailed information will become available within the next few days; therefore, in the next update objectives will be expanded upon to include newly found information. The update will be published shortly.

This operation is expected to be implemented over 3 months, and will therefore be completed by 4 September 2008; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation by 4 December 2008.

[<click here for contact details, and here for the map>](#)

## The situation

Heavy rain across Belize caused rivers in southern and northern Belize to overflow. Tropical Storm Arthur formed on Saturday 31 May 2008 and made landfall in northern Belize on the Yucatan Peninsula before



Floods in southern Belize are gravely affecting the area. Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belize

becoming the first named storm of the Atlantic Hurricane Season. The rains from tropical storm Arthur compounded the effects of tropical storm Alma which had developed in the Eastern Pacific on 27 May. Together, storms Alma and Arthur brought approximately 10 inches of rain within 36 hours across Belize, causing flash floods in low lying areas. At least one bridge and part of a highway were severely damaged, isolating many areas of the country. Several other major bridges are reported under water, including one between Belize City and Belmopan. Flooding is also reported in northern Belize and in other areas. One village has already been evacuated and shelters have been opened in both the districts of Corozal and Orange Walk.

Belize River Valley communities are being flooded and face possible isolation as roads become impassable.

At this time, assessments are being completed to determine the detailed extent of damages, although many areas are inaccessible at this moment due to road closures. Approximately 10,000 people are affected and seven people are reported dead as well as various missing.

## Coordination and partnerships

The Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) is working closely with Belize's National Emergency Organization (NEMO) on assessments and is also supporting government run shelters. In addition, the BRCS is attending meetings being held by various ministries, such as the Ministry of Health, to determine further needs and actions. In addition, UN agencies attend the meetings in which also the BRCS is present. This ensures a close coordination and avoids duplication of efforts.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The BRCS disaster management committee was activated and all branches are activating their emergency plans and conducting assessments. The Dangriga branch has offered to shelter 40 persons for four days in its centre. Belmopan Chairperson is liaising with the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO). The Belmopan branch is preparing to assist with the provision of food to people who are currently staying in common shelters in the city. The Orange Walk Branch is preparing meals for people in shelters and is also delivering food packages to people who are staying with family members or friends. A Damaged and Needs Assessment (DANA) team will travel to Belize River Valley communities. In addition, National Intervention Teams (NITs) from Stann Creek Branch were activated to carry out assessments of living conditions and needs in shelters. BRCS is contacting other organizations in order to coordinate response to avoid duplication of efforts. The Norwegian Red Cross is supporting activities with BRCS as part of the DIPECHO program in the Caribbean and will provide support to this operation if necessary.

Upon request from BRCS, the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) has deployed a Disaster Management delegate and a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) member specialized in logistics to support its operation and assist in the development of its plan of action in favour of those affected by the disaster.

## The needs

The BRCS has identified the following as the most immediate needs:

**Shelter:** At this time, the government is providing shelters and BRCS is supporting the activities undertaken to manage these shelters. Although currently the need for short term shelter is met, once access to restricted areas is available and detailed damage assessment data becomes available, the need for intermediate and/or long term shelter will need to be addressed between the government and BRC.

**Non-food items (NFI):** The following NFI have been identified: Tarpaulins, Blankets (light), Hygiene Kits, Buckets (14 litres covered), Cleaning Kits, Kitchen Kits, Mosquito nets and Collapsible Jerry Cans (10ltr).

**Food:** Food prices in Belize are elevated and access to scarce items such as rice and flour are problematic. Food Parcels are being sought.

**Water and Sanitation:** Two well cleaning pumps, fuel for generators, and water purification items will be needed for the operation. The BRCS owns equipment and supplementary water purification items (filters, chemicals, etc.).

**Health:** Psychosocial support is incorporated into the relief phase.

### Beneficiary selection

Number of Beneficiaries: 500 families, 2500 individuals.

Location of beneficiaries: Stann Creek District (Sarawee, Sittee River, Valley Community, Hope Creek, Mullins River, Middlesex), Corozal and Orange Walk Districts (Douglas, Concepcion, San Roman, San Pedro, San Victor). As more detailed assessments are completed, beneficiary targeting could be adjusted.

Stann Creek, which is located in southern Belize is the worst affected area (also declared a disaster area by the Prime Minister). Loss of life (all confirmed deaths are from the region) as well as property/livelihoods are reported. Based on initial assessments from both internal and external sources, humanitarian intervention is urgently required.

Immediate relief items will be distributed to those in shelters within the affected region. Thereafter, relief distribution and recovery will be delivered based on verified damages and populations deemed most vulnerable according to Sphere Standards.

## The proposed operation

The Belize Red Cross Society Plan of Action (PoA) aims to respond to the needs of 500 affected families (2,500 beneficiaries) and to increase the capacity of the National Society in disaster response.

The PoA of the Belize Red Cross Society will be implemented over a period of three months.

A Disaster Management Delegate as well as a Logistics RIT are in Belize supporting the National Society in creating and implementing the POA.

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective: 500 families (2,500 beneficiaries) will benefit from the provision of relief items to recover from the effects of the Tropical Storm.**

Distributions are carried out according to assessment and selection criteria that identify actual needs and vulnerable groups, and are based on careful registration and a process that controls, monitors, and records the movement of the items.

### Activities planned:

- Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments.
- Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.
- Develop an exit strategy.

## Emergency shelter

**Objective: A safe and healthy environment is provided to 100 of the most vulnerable families.**

During the relief phase of the operation, volunteers of the BRCS will provide support to the activities that are being undertaken in shelters that are being run and managed by the government.

Activities planned:

- Develop beneficiary strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance.
- Distribute relief supplies and control supply movements from point of dispatch to end user within shelters.
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions.
- Develop an exit strategy as resident return to their affected communities.

## Emergency health

**Objective: The health risks of the emergency on the affected population is reduced through the provision of preventive and community-level education to 100 families (500 beneficiaries) in 3 months**

Activities planned:

- Initiate a health promotion campaign within the affected population focusing on First Aid, Public Health (vector control) and HIV/AIDS, targeting 5000 people.
- Host 4 community workshops focusing on First Aid, Public Health, Psychosocial Support and HIV/AIDS, targeting 100 people.

## Emergency health

**Objective: The risk of waterborne and water related diseases will be reduced through the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation as well as hygiene promotion to 500 families (or 2500 beneficiaries) in targeted areas as appropriate to the operation for 3 months.**

- Assess the existing coverage with a view of ensuring availability of an adequate water supply
- Provide safe water to 500 families as damaged systems are restored.
- Provide potable water, appropriate sanitation and hygiene promotion for 500 families in affected location.
- Conduct training/information programmes for Red Cross volunteers and beneficiaries, in particular regional hygiene promotion and the safe use of Water Treatment Products (e.g. chlorination tablets).

## How we work

*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

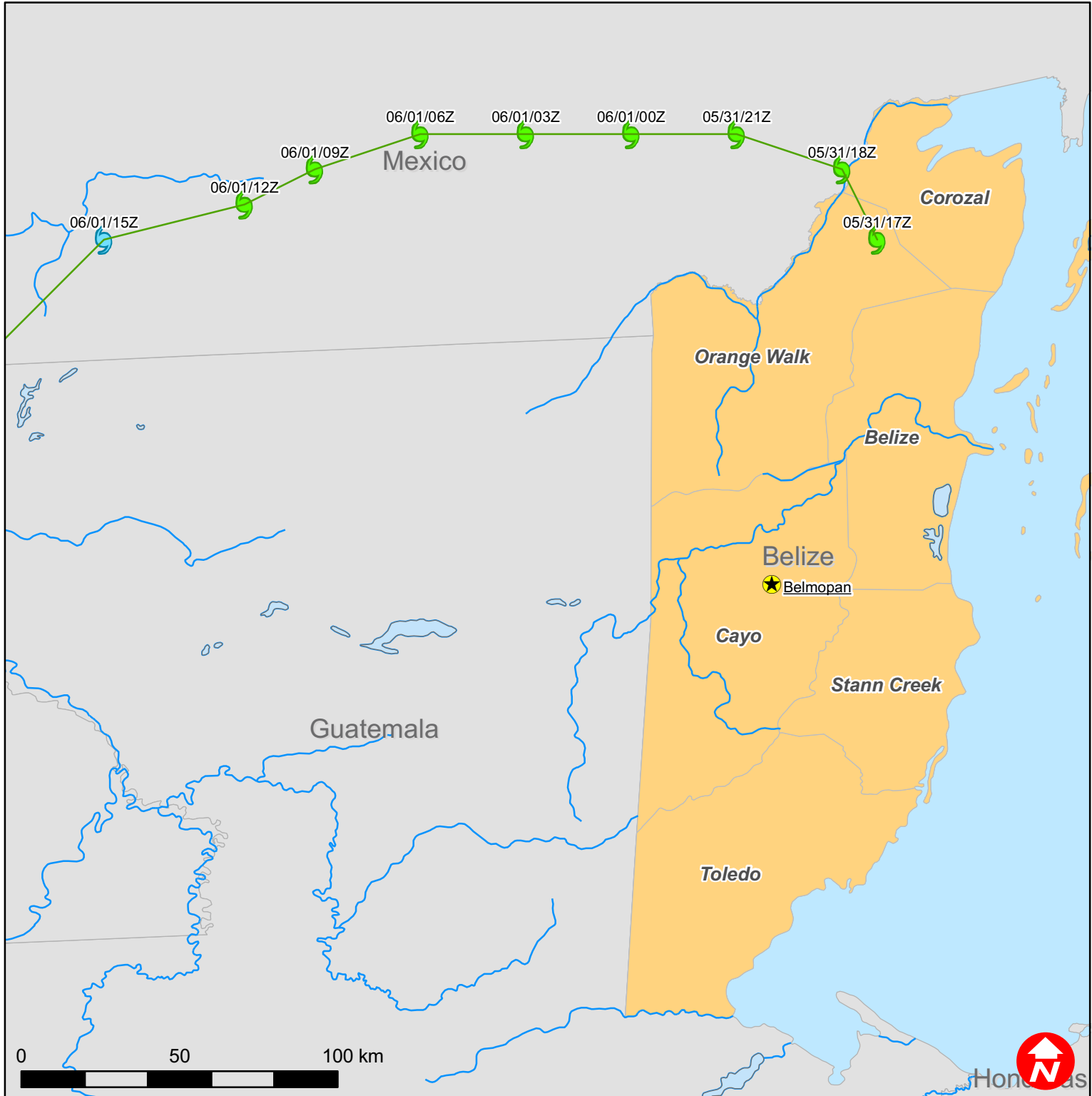
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# Belize: Tropical storm Arthur



Entire country of Belize has been affected by torrential rainfall and flooding, especially in the northern and southern districts. around 10000 people are affected and seven people were reported dead.

-  TROPICAL DEPRESSION
-  TROPICAL STORM
-  Capitals