

BELIZE: HURRICANE KEITH

22 December
2000

appeal no. 29/2000

situation report no. 2

period covered: 16 October - 18 December 2000

The hurricane relief operation is fully underway in all six programme areas: food relief; vector control; well cleaning; health training; water tank construction and latrine rehabilitation. A recent mission by the water and sanitation delegate based in Venezuela was particularly useful as regards implementation of the water and sanitation component. All activities are funded, following a recent confirmation of an ECHO contribution, and constant liaison is ensured with government authorities and external partners.

The Context

For 3 days, from September 30 to October 2 Belize was battered by Hurricane Keith (category 4). The most severe wind damage occurred on the cayes (Caulker and Ambergris). The Belize Red Cross Society (BRCS) responded immediately by shipping out emergency supplies from its disaster preparedness stocks which had been supplied by the Japanese Red Cross. However, the mainland districts of Belize and Orange Walk suffered extensive flood damage, along with the associated health risks and economic setbacks. For weeks after the Hurricane struck, the water levels continued to rise as persistent, heavy rains caused more flooding. Red Cross emergency relief has focused its efforts on assisting the flood victims on the mainland, while the government, aided by the British Army and others, have concentrated their relief efforts on the cayes.

Latest Events

Two and a half months after Hurricane Keith struck Belize, the most visible signs of the hurricane have diminished. The rivers have receded, clean-up of much of the debris has taken place, and new growth is beginning to show in the blighted areas. Nevertheless, the relief efforts of the Belize Red Cross continue in 6 major areas of activity to ensure the continued health and safety of those most seriously affected by the hurricane. The six major areas of activity include: food relief; vector control; well cleaning; health training; water tank construction and latrine rehabilitation.

The water and sanitation delegate from Venezuela visited the sub-delegation between 1 and 5 December. The purpose of his visit was to review potential long term water and sanitation interventions for Belize.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

Relief •

The day after the hurricane struck, the BRCS began distributing blankets, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, and tarpaulins from their disaster preparedness stocks supplied by the Japanese Red Cross. The National Society purchased and distributed 5,289 food and hygiene parcels to 26,293 beneficiaries in Belize, Orange Walk, and Belmopan between early October and mid November. The parcels consisted of flour, sugar, beans, rice, corned beef, vegetable oil, baking powder, toilet paper, tooth paste and soap.

The BRCS also distributed relief items to 4,622 vulnerable individuals in Belize City during the month of October. Relief items for these parcels were donated by the local community and included food, clothing, blankets and hygiene supplies. An American Red Cross shipment of 2,700 food parcels (valued at USD 59,600), and 4,086 hygiene kits (valued at USD 14,400) was received and distributed between mid November and mid December. In addition, the BRCS received and distributed a German Red Cross shipment of 2 containers with kitchen sets and water buckets for 1,600 families valued at USD 70,000.

The BRCS is currently completing a final food distribution to 1,250 beneficiaries in Orange Walk and Belize district. The last distribution is scheduled for Friday, 28 December.

Health •

The BRCS health coordinator was appointed in November. Printing of health education materials for BRCS training has been completed. These include: posters on "Paths to Illness"; flyers on "Diarrhoea and Vomiting & What to Do"; colouring books on "Cholera"; and booklets on disaster preparedness. The first 4 of a total of 9 health training workshops have been completed (3 in Orange Walk, 1 in Belize District) and health training is carried out in communities prioritized for intervention by the water and sanitation team. Participants include community leaders, community health workers, volunteers, women's groups, churches and youth groups. A total of 420 participants will receive training in the following subjects: the transmission of disease; vector and waterborne diseases; water purification and safe storage; basic guidelines for protection of well water and safe use of latrines; community, household and personal hygiene; Red Cross history and work; sharing of experiences on hurricane Keith. In January, 3 additional workshops will be held by BRCS in conjunction with the Ministry of Health (MoH) targeting participants from the health professions.

Well Cleaning

BRCS has received 3 submersible pumps plus other supplies from Oxfam to assist with cleaning of hand dug wells. A BRCS counterpart to the water and sanitation delegate was appointed in November. Communities were visited and well cleaning was prioritized, with the expectation of cleaning up to a maximum of 50 wells.

Two well cleaning teams were selected, each with a team leader, a technician and an assistant; teams were then trained and nineteen wells have been cleaned so far. It is expected that well cleaning activities will be completed in January.

Vector Control

Vector control chemicals were purchased - 1,500 kg of Malathion; 250 kg of K-Othrine; and 160 kg of Abate, and immediately used in the government spraying programme. Special clean-up activities took place in the Western region, around Benque Viejo, as this region borders Guatemala which has a high incidence of haemorrhagic dengue fever. Activities include indoor and outdoor spraying, clean-up of mosquito breeding areas, and an education campaign. All vector programmes are planned in coordination with the Ministry of Health and PAHO. The Ministry of Health has stepped up its vector control programme in the hope of avoiding outbreaks of malaria and haemorrhagic dengue.

Water Tank Construction

Plans for the installation of 100 x 660 gallon water tanks have been completed as part of the BRCS emergency water harvesting programme. 50 villages have been selected and each village will have 2 tanks installed on a community building. A water tank supervisor has been selected and construction of the first 6 water tanks has begun and is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Latrine Repair

Plans to repair the superstructure of up to 150 latrines damaged by the storm have been completed and so far 95 latrines in need of repair have been identified. Reconstruction is expected to begin in early January.

Latrine Composting Pilot Project

After the visit by the water and sanitation delegate based in Venezuela, the idea of experimenting with a new latrine better suited for the flood prone land of Belize was developed. A pilot project was designed and introduced whereby 20 elevated, cement enclosed, dual-chamber, composting latrines are to be built in 2 different communities. In order for the project to proceed, field research should be conducted to see how the community would respond to composting latrines. The proposal would then be submitted to the Ministry of Health for approval. The approximate cost for each latrine is of approximately USD 750.

Telecommunications •

The regional telecommunications delegate based in Santo Domingo spent a week in November to implement the plans which were drawn up during his assessment mission in October. The installation of the following was completed: 6 VHF base stations; 6 VHF mobile stations; 1 repeater station; 1 HF radio.

Outstanding Needs

There are no outstanding needs at present.

External Relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Mexican government has offered assistance to the government of Belize, by sending 50 workers to help with vector control fogging in the Northern region of Corozal and Orange Walk districts. The Rural

Development Ministry has been chlorinating bore holes and distributing chlorine test kits. NEMO has provided some portable toilets to flooded areas and UNICEF has donated iodine tablets for household drinking water purification.

PAHO has appealed to ECHO for water and sanitation, health training, and rehabilitation of hospitals. The Federation is coordinating with PAHO as regards complementary projects. Two Oxfam representatives, visited Belize between 2 and 5 December. They met representatives of the Federation and the National Society and made a visit to the field to observe the well activities sponsored by Oxfam.

Contributions

A Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) contribution of CHF 120,000 was released for the operation.

The Spanish Red Cross contributed US 30,000 directly to the National Society. In addition, the Spanish Red Cross has provided a relief delegate for the operation. The American Red Cross (ARC) contributed USD 25,000 in cash to the Belize Red Cross Society to support the relief operation, together with 4,080 family hygiene kits, valued at USD 14,400, and 2,700 food parcels, valued at USD 59,600. The Latter Day Saints (LDS) in partnership with the American Red Cross has made a donation of USD 30,000 in cash for local procurement of family relief items which is a direct contribution to the BRCS. The German Red Cross has contributed 2 container loads of cooking sets, and plastic buckets for 1,600 families valued at USD 70,000.

See Annex 1 for details.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

Hurricane Keith: Belize						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 29/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				12/22/00
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				1,260,502		TOTAL COVERAGE 149.9%
AMERICAN - RC		28,500	USD	50,544	16.10.00	DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO BELIZE RC
AMERICAN - RC		7,500	USD	13,301	16.10.00	IRT TEAM ASSISTANCE, DIRECT TO BELIZE RC
AMERICAN - PRIVATE (LDS)		30,000	USD	53,205	16.10.00	DIRECT CONTRIBUTION TO BELIZE RC
BRITISH - GOVT DFID		98,039	GBP	245,098	17.10.00	
ECHO		550,000	EUR	837,155	06.12.00	
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,235	11.10.00	
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,055	14.12.00	
IRISH - GOVT		94,613	IEP	183,521	07.11.00	
JAPANESE - RC				67,000	21.10.00	
OXFAM		15,332	GBP	38,790	20.12.00	
SPANISH - RC		30,000	USD	53,205	06.10.00	DONATION DIRECT TO BELIZE RC
SWISS - GOVT		50,000	USD	88,675	20.10.00	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				1,638,784	CHF	130.0%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
AMERICAN - RC		81,000	USD	143,653	16.10.00	2'700 FOOD PARCELS AND 4'080 HYGIENE KITS, DIRECT DONATION TO BELIZE RC
NORWAY RC	DELEGATE			10,000	10/13/00	HEALTH DELEGATE
OXFAM	DELEGATE			10,000	20.12.00	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEER
SPAIN RC	DELEGATE			15,000	10/13/00	RELIEF DELEGATE
SWEDEN RC	DELEGATE			10,000	10/13/00	TEAM LEADER
GERMAN - RC		70,000	USD	61,950	30.10.00	KITCHEN SETS AND BUCKETS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				250,603	CHF	19.9%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						