

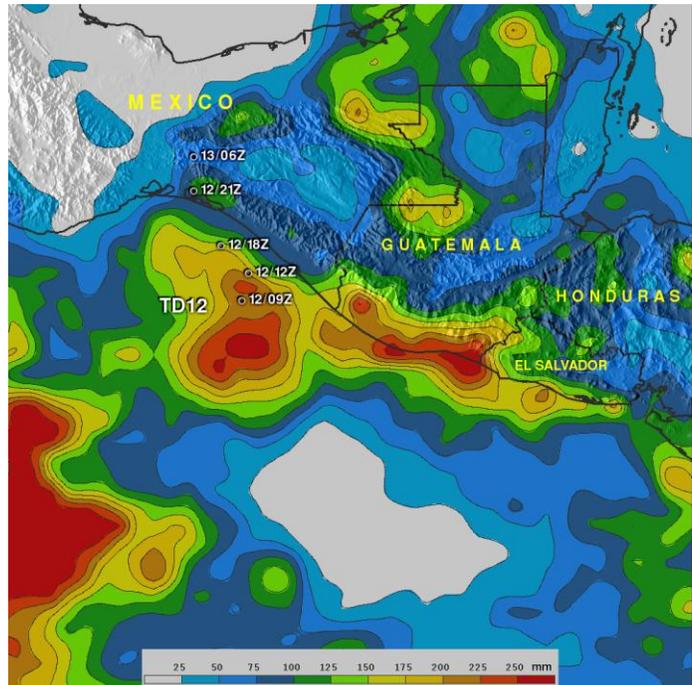


18 October, 2011

PAHO/WHO EOC SITUATION REPORT #2

Floods in Central America

The low pressure system that has hit Central America since October 10 has caused floods and landslides affecting 600,000 people in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua including 55,000 people displaced to 700 shelters in the countries. The Ministries of Health have reported damages to health centers and equipments, and loss of supplies. These issues put public health at risk if they are not addressed promptly. El Salvador has declared a national emergency, and Nicaragua and Guatemala has declared a state of emergency. The ministries of health have deployed field teams for



Source: NASA - TRMM

damage assessment, surveillance, water and sanitation and mental health assessments. The challenge for ministries of health is to restore and maintain the delivery of health services, monitor water quality and control vector and water borne diseases through coordination with other sectors.

El Salvador

There are currently 32 deaths reported and 20,000 persons displaced to 353 shelters set up in El Salvador. There are almost 150,000 affected persons and the number could increase given the density of the population and ongoing rains. The Government of El Salvador has declared a national emergency for a more rapid and appropriate response.

The Situation Report is produced by the PAHO/WHO Emergency Operations Center to inform about recent developments in the region. New editions will be issued as the situation requires. To subscribe or unsubscribe to these reports please [visit this page](#).

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Several water sources have been contaminated and 2,222 wells have been damaged. The Ministry of Health is working to restore access to safe water for populations affected areas and shelters. The Ministry of Health is working for epidemiological surveillance, especially monitoring respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases and preventing outbreaks of dengue. The ministry continues to give medical attention in shelters. Several main roads and bridges have been blocked or damaged, making access to healthcare difficult.

122 health facilities are affected which includes 110 basic health units, 9 hospitals, and 3 administrative health units. The kidney center in Lempa was also flooded limiting access for 350 patients who were receiving treatment.

The PAHO/WHO country office in El Salvador has declared an administrative emergency.

Guatemala

The government of Guatemala has reported 35 dead, 19 injured and 478,000 affected people due to heavy rains in Guatemala. There are 12,699 people in 106 shelters.

Damages of 50 bridges and 8 roads have been reported. Ten bridges have sustained structural damages and highways were shut down, effectively isolating Quetzaltenango and Quiche. Assessments carried out by the government have indicated that 3,767 people are still in high risk areas. In Guatemala, the WASH cluster has been activated.

In the municipality of Santa Rosa, several earthquakes that began on September 19 have left 3,500 people displaced to shelters. These shelters are now being overwhelmed with the newly displaced population from the rains.

Nicaragua

13 out of 15 departments in Nicaragua were affected by rains that caused 7 deaths and 12,699 displaced to 106 shelters. INETER has reported that the current level of rainfall is comparable to the record breaking rains in 2010 which caused evacuation of 3,000 people. Government of Nicaragua has declared a state of national calamity. The Ministry of Health is monitoring the H1N1, dengue, and leptospirosis cases which may increase in affected areas of the rain.

Honduras

At least 5 health centers in Honduras have reported damage from rains and floods. There are around 50,000 people affected, 13 deaths, and 8,000 people displaced in nearly 100 shelters.



Source: OCHA

The government of Honduras declared emergency in Choluteca and Valle departments in the southern region. Another 11 out of 18 departments are on yellow alert. There are significant damages to road infrastructure hindering the delivery of humanitarian aid.

There are reports of damage to water distribution systems and pumps which has left about 150,000 people without water services in Choluteca. Vector control and water supplies are some of the most urgent needs present in Honduras.

PAHO Actions

PAHO/WHO has deployed five experts from the response team to affected areas; two experts to El Salvador, two experts to Guatemala, and one expert to Nicaragua to support emergency coordination, risk communication, and LSS/SUMA in country offices. Chlorine tablets available in Panama stocks have been sent to El Salvador.

PAHO/WHO has initiated the appeals process to support the health response in the affected countries.