Highlights

- According to the Government, approximately 10,000 people have lost their homes and require humanitarian assistance.
- 164 people remain in shelters, almost half are in Belize City.
- Water systems are being restored, however, some rural areas in the Belize district are operating with generators due to lack of electricity.
- Flooding remains a concern in many areas such as the Cayo District and Belize River Valley as rivers and dams remain at high levels.
- Damage to houses, utilities, agriculture and tourism industry.
- UNICEF Belize along with PAHO/WHO plans to strengthen the WASH coordination mechanisms and is in close communication with the government and other partners to identify potential areas of support based on an ongoing needs assessment and following official requests from the national authorities.
- Preliminary assessments show that losses from Earl are estimated to exceed BZ$220 million (some US$110 million).
- Additional US$124,900 requested from UNICEF by the Ministry of Labour, Local Government, and Rural Development to support the clean-up efforts in Belize City.
- UNICEF is supporting the Government of Belize with 350 family/hygiene kits and has requested $50,000USD to support the cleaning efforts and to efforts in WASH.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

According to NEMO, relief efforts are still ongoing after Hurricane Earl ripped through Belize as a category 1 hurricane on 4 August. The Government continues to provide immediate relief to the affected people. Some 10,000 people have been directly or indirectly affected. There are 164 people remaining in shelters, almost half of these are in the Belize district, which was hit the hardest. The focus also remains on restoring critical lifeline facilities, ensuring operational normalcy at all ports, and assessing agriculture, fisheries, transportation, utilities, communication, infrastructure, housing, cultural, and environmental situation.

The Hurricane affected primarily Belize City, Belize Rural, Orange Walk, Cayo, and the Stann Creek districts. NEMO has much concern over the serious sufferings endured by thousands of Belizians and the devastation of homes, businesses, government and private buildings. Major infrastructure and building damage, many roads...
and streets are blocked in San Pedro, Caye Caulker, Belize City, and Ladyville, Belize River Valley, Orange Walk, Belmopan and other affected areas.

The City Emergency Management Organization (CEMO), the Police and eventually the Belize Defense Force (BDF), responded to over 100 search and rescue requests under extremely dangerous conditions in the middle of the Hurricane. Neighbour to neighbour assistance and care giving, highlighted the Belizean spirit in the face of danger.

Roofing and broken lumber, down trees, electrical wires, splinters and nails are strewn all over the San Pedro, Caye Caulker Cayes, Belize City, Ladyville, Lords Bank and River Valley where there is considerable damage.

NEMO is now responding to flash flooding in the Cayo District. Communities along the Macal and Mopan River must seek higher ground immediately. All dams are at flood stage and people are encouraged to seek access to shelters if they are in low lying areas.

Additionally, the Prime Minister of Belize addressed the public on Thursday, 4th August 2016 to indicate that he is aware that there are thousands of affected persons in the Belize District, including San Pedro, Caye Caulker as well as parts of Cayo, Stann Creek and Orange Walk. The Prime Minister has also named Dr. Carla Barnett, Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister, to be the focal point for all recovery coordination.

Based on NEMO’s indicators and assessments in the field it is anticipated that damages will exceed BZ$220m. Indicators for agriculture show possible devastating impacts in one of the main agricultural belt. Agricultural and housing sector losses are conservatively estimated at $70m without assessed values of damages/losses in the public utilities, tourism, and fisheries sectors.

UN Rapid Assessment

On 4th August 2016 UNICEF Belize CO conducted a preliminary rapid assessment of the situation in the most vulnerable communities in South Side Belize City observing that the south side was seriously affected with homes visibly destroyed, flooded, or seriously damaged. Hundreds of families have lost their belongings and will be forced to seek shelter among relatives, neighbours or in the government shelters.

The most relevant issues identified in that first assessment were the following (See the Annex A for detailed images):

- Water, hygiene, sanitation.
- Exposed electrical installations and other environmental hazards (presence of crocodiles in flooded waters and reports of big snakes on the highways or roads during the storm).

On 5th August 2016, UNICEF conducted a second rapid assessment of the situation in 3 Belize City shelters. The most relevant issues identified in that first assessment were the following (See Annex B).

- 25 families and 44 children are currently housed in this three shelters because their homes are seriously damaged or completely destroyed.
- Most families have young children, however some of the older children are staying with extended family members in other districts.
- Most families indicate they felt safe in the shelters especially because 2 police officers and a shelter manager are constantly on duty.
- Shelters are regularly visited by Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA) staff who ensure food and water is delivered in a timely manner.
- Medical assistance is available as needed.

Partners’ reports

UNICEF’s established contact with our Community Based Organization partners. The partners in Toledo indicated that the major damage was to crops and agricultural produce and that the children that they provide support to, have been unaffected.
Project *Ounababa* that works in the Stann Creek area indicated that the children and families are slowly recovering from the storm. The Director, Project *Ounababa* reported that all UNICEF-targeted children in Dangriga are fine.

There is an important need of hygiene kits.

Child Development Foundation (CDF), a non-governmental organization with offices in Belmopan and Belize City, reported that they are in the process of collecting information on how many families are in shelters. CDF works with parents and children from South Side Belize. According to CDF, majority of the families they work with have experienced major loss and damage to property.

Director of the Child Development Foundation, Diana Shaw, indicated that approximately 50 children in their programme between ages 9-16 have been affected. Amongst things that have been damaged are school essentials. Ms. Shaw, indicated that there is a need for approximately 100 hygiene kits.

**Humanitarian leadership and coordination**

As the ultimate coordinator of all actions involved in an emergency response, the Government of Belize (GoB) holds the responsibility for disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. The National Emergency Management Organization is the focal agency for the emergency response and is assisted by the relevant line ministries. The United Nations as a system is committed to participate in Coordination agreements and to provide support to this national structure.

The RC has contacted NEMO and has been preliminarily informed that the Government may be requesting international support. Based on that, the RC has sent a message to the Regional Office of OCHA (UN OCHA ROLAC) and WFP to be on stand-by. At the United Nations Disaster Management Team meeting held on Thursday 4th, it was shared that 3 PAHO experts will be in country to support the work in WASH and health assessments. An expert from OCHA ROLAC is already in the country to support humanitarian coordination with UNETT.

The health sector response has been coordinated by PAHO. An information meeting was held on August 8th with the participation of UNICEF, IFRC, Red Cross, PAHO/WHO, Ministry of Health and OCHA. The following support has been extended so far:

**Red Cross**
- Have family/hygiene kits for family of 5; not sure about the contents of the kit
- Have 300 treated bed nets for distribution
- Request from NEMO to provide water in Santa Familia and Bullet Tree
- Received $5000USD support from USAID
- Have 2/3 small water units to provide water to communities
- USAID is supporting the Red Cross in water systems and distribution of family kits

**IFRC**
- Have assessed 6 communities in Belize City
- Have 2 persons working in the field on livelihood assessments
- IFRC deployed experts in: shelter, livelihood, cash transfer, information management, and assessments.
- IFRC has released a DREF for $143,000 and continues to work with the Government and UN agencies in relief efforts
- Have printed materials for Zika prevention
- Can provide (if requested) training communities on participatory sanitation and hygiene practices

**Identified needs:**

- Water requires treatment in many areas. Water quality testing support is needed too
- Vector and water-borne diseases are of concern
- Back-up water supply and electric generators for health centers, chlorine for disinfection and water treatment, risk communication and PPES for first responders
- Water and purification accessories, purification tablets; filters; pumps
Possible need for psycho-social support for children in the shelters Public awareness raising regarding protection from waterborne and vector borne diseases, hygiene, protection etc.

All UN offices are operational and all UN staff was back in office on Friday, 5 August 2016.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

WASH

UNICEF Belize along with PAHO plans to strengthen the intersectoral WASH coordination mechanisms to ensure that all WASH related support is targeted and well-coordinated. UNICEF is also in close communication with the government and other partners to identify potential areas of support based on an ongoing needs assessment and following official requests from the national authorities. The CO will also coordinate with PAHO/WHO to look at existing plans in programme as it relates to Zika. Implementation of municipal risk response plans will be ongoing as preventative measures for the Zika Virus.

Communication for Development (C4D) Strategy

Protect & Survive booklets that were prepared with key messages for cases of emergency are being distributed with family/hygiene kits given out through partnership with the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA).

The messages center on proper water, sanitation and hygiene, with prevention practices for avoiding waterborne diseases; breastfeeding and infant child feeding practices; and on safety and protection.

Additionally, local partners will be asked to consult adults, children, and young people in affected areas regarding the post hurricane situation. The aim of this consultation with families is to promote psychological healing, cohesion and social mobilization.

Supply and Logistics

At the request of the Ministry of Human Development and with the activation of an LTA with a local provider, UNICEF Belize CO is providing 350 basic hygiene kits for families who are in shelters and are displaced. There are no challenges with the LTA, except that more funds will be utilized to support the requests.

Resource mobilization and funding gaps

UNICEF Belize has approached the donor community in the country to determine the potential availability of financial resources.

UNICEF has also received a request of $124,900USD from the Mayor of Belize City, through the Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development for cleaning up streets/affected areas. UNDP and UNICEF are both working to confirm some financial support as requested.

In line with the identified needs, UNICEF CO capacities and Government requests for assistance thus far, the following funding gaps have been identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Budget (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness raising in WASH (including ZIKA and other vector/waterborne diseases)</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for cleaning up efforts in Belize City and Cayo districts, as per government request</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene Kits</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safety and Security

Post Hurricane Earl has created safety and security concerns in affected areas. According to NEMO, national security agencies (Belize National Police Department) charter to maintain law and order have safety and security situations under control and that safety and security risk threats remain low and manageable. To date all relevant safety and security government agencies are working together to mitigate and prevent potential crime and violence. One inhibiting factor, however, is that electricity is still not fully restored to all parts of the country, particularly to areas hard hit by Hurricane Earl. The lack of electricity is a concern to Law enforcement agencies and as such they have increased their operational capabilities to deter crime in areas of concern.

Who to contact for further information:

Ivan Yerovi
Representative
Belize
Tel: +501 223 3864/2609/7294
6100429
Fax: +501 223 3891
Email: iyerovi@unicef.org

Denise Robateau
Emergency Focal Point
Belize
Tel: +501 223 3864/2609/7294
Fax: +501 223 3891
Email: drobateau@unicef.org

Ilija Talev
Social Policy Specialist
Belize
Tel: +501 223 3864/2609/7294
Fax: +501 223 3891
Email: italev@unicef.org
Annex A

Field Report:
Belize City, Post Earl, 4 August 2016

Short Review:
Damages within the inner city areas are limited to down trees, fell electricity poles, flood and drainage clogged by silt in some areas. However, shantytowns, particularly, the newly built communities in open areas such as the Mahogany Extension were affected quite severely.

Some residents of “Gungulung”, a vulnerable community in the South Side Belize City, went to shelters provided by the government, but many chose to stay home despite the clearly perceivable dangers.

The officials, the media, and the people have to work together to ensure that shelters are safe and child friendly.

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The tilted brown home (centre) was housing six children during the night of the hurricane. At 10.30 pm the home started to collapse and the family had to run out from it and stayed with their neighbours.
Ilija Talev, Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF Belize visited to conduct the preliminary assessment.

UNICEF staff spotted a crocodile at the canal in the middle of a vulnerable neighbourhood where children are hanging around nearby and in the same water body.
The Resident Coordinator, Christian Salazar, UNDP Deputy Representative, Karen Bernard, along with core UNICEF programme team and UNDSS conducted a field assessment of three of the four currently open Belize City shelters.

At this moment, only 4 shelters remain open in Belize City where 27 displaced families are currently seeking refuge.

The priority needs focus on food and sanitation for the families, and ensuring placement and reconstruction of their homes.

Situation

- Visited three primary schools used as shelters: St. Luke Methodist, St. John’s Vianney, Unity Presbyterian, all located in South-Side Belize City.
- 25 families and 44 children are currently housed in the three shelters.
- All families remain in the shelters because their homes are seriously damaged or completely destroyed.
- Most families have young children, however some parents indicated that they sent some of the older children to stay with extended family members in other districts.
- Most families indicated that they felt safe in the shelters especially because 2 police officers and a shelter manager are constantly on duty.
- Shelters are regularly visited by Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA) staff who ensure food and water is delivered in a timely manner.
- Medical assistance is available as needed.
- There is currently no electricity available in the shelters. Belize Electricity Limited, the main provider, informed the public that electricity is to be restored later in the day.
- Issues were noted with the WASH facilities. Due to lack of electricity, and low water pressures, the WASH facilities were not up to standard.
- During the shelter visit we also encountered social workers from the MHDSTPA conducting home assessments. The Ministry is tasked with assessing the needs to families in order for the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) to provide the necessary recovery support.
- MHDSTPA is providing basic cleaning products directly in communities most affected by the hurricane.
- Additional visits will need to be scheduled for assessments in other affected areas.
Shelter Manager, Early Childhood Development Officer & UNDSS Focal Point discussing shelter needs.

Family and Children at one of the Belize City Shelter.
Police officers supporting the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation to distribute basic supplies.