Weather situation

Hurricane Matthew has impacted Haiti in the area of Port-à-Piment. He then continued his journey North and swept during several hours the departments of Sud and Grande Anse in the South West of the island. Matthew battered Haiti’s southwest coast with 145 mile-per-hour (230 kph) winds and surging seas that flooded coastal towns on Tuesday, tearing at trees and rooftops before moving out to sea. Rising sea levels and torrential rains have caused major flooding in southern Haiti since Sunday evening. Fierce winds knocked out communications with the southern part of the island for hours but telephone service is slowly being restored. The eye of the violent Category 4 Hurricane Matthew passed over Haiti’s western tip early on Tuesday, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said, bringing devastating winds, heavy rains and a storm surge with massive waves. It was forecast to remain extremely powerful as it made its way to Cuba and the Bahamas and a hurricane watch was issued for parts of southeast Florida, which the forecasters said Matthew could reach late on Thursday.

Situation in the country

- The Bridge on Route Nationale 2 is down cutting of the access to the South. It is the only one linking the capital Port-au-Prince to the southern peninsula.
- The coast has been affected in the department of Grande Anse (468,000 inhabitants). In Port-Salut (75,000 inhabitants in the district) and Port-à-Piment (19 000 inhabitants in the commune) flood victims were evacuated. People who did not want to leave their home died.
- The city of Les Cayes which counts 86,780 inhabitants is totally flooded.
- Currently, over 1,243,000 people were affected in the departments of Grande Anse (468,000) and the South(775,000).
- There is an outbreak of cholera in Randel with five community deaths and one hospital death**
- Emergency operations centres are always active and outreach activities were strengthened.
- 234 shelters are open across the country. 186 temporary shelters are available in the South.
- The Ministry of Education has sent an official note announcing that schools will remain closed until the 10th October 2016.
- 6000 persons were evacuated in the South.

**COMITE DEPARTEMENTAL DU SUD, Sitrep #4 - 03 Octobre 2016 (08:30 p.m.)
Actions of UNICEF and partners

- As the bridge on road 2 is down, UNICEF’s teams are looking to access to the South either with MINUSTAH’s helicopters if the weather allows it, or by finding an alternative road.

- UNICEF organizes the first rapid responses. The priority is to ensure that people affected by Hurricane Matthew have access to water and sanitation.

- Two UNICEF staff multisectoral teams will try to reach the two most affected departments to support them in the rapid diagnosis of the needs and the initial responses.

- After the conduction of the first field assessments, additional needs will be known (water, sanitation, hygiene, education and new inputs will be ordered.

- Over the past days UNICEF has been working frantically with the Government and the humanitarian community in order to preposition crucial stocks for 10,000 people in three areas: the South, the Artibonite and Northwest. In each of these areas, an immediate response is ready to be offered to 650 families through multisectoral aid kits. These contain hygiene kits, water treatment at home, a mosquito net, a bucket and soap.

- UNICEF’s partners “Emergencies and Cholera” for these zones support the Departmental Emergency Operations Centers of the DPC (Civil Protection Directorate) for any rapid diagnostic initiative and first intervention. (ACTED in the South and Grande Anse, Solidarité Internationale in the Nippes and in the South East, ACF in Artibonite and in the Northwest, the French Red Cross and Solidarité Internationale in the West, Oxfam in the Centre and in North East.)

- UNICEF also supported the DINEPA (National Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation) for prepositioning equipment in all departments. This contingency stock meets the first assistance activities in Water Sanitation and Hygiene. A truck is immediately available to carry additional “DINEPA equipment” (bladders of water storage, slabs for emergency toilets, chlorine, etc.) in the most affected areas.

- Two other trucks are ready to go for local support on request of the State or one of our partners for local equipment transport.

- Prepositioning of equipment was carried out taking into account the recent alerts of cholera cases in order to avoid the hurricane Matthew has an impact on the epidemic.

- Finally, emergency education materials (school kits, tents, early childhood development kits, etc.) available in Panama, is ready to be sent.

- Regular contact with the staff to ensure security and safety have been made.

- Based on the current figures a minimum of 2 million USD will be needed for UNICEF to set-up a response that covers immediate life-saving needs with further needs to be identified as the impact becomes clear.

UNICEF Haiti in the Media

- Marc Vincent, UNICEF Haiti Representative answered to the questions of Radio Canada, BBC, Al Jazeera, et de la Irish National Radio.

- Find the article “Lockdown but ready” on UNICEF Haiti’s preparations to Matthew on our blog Timounyo.

- Follow the situation on the Twitter and Facebook accounts of UNICEF Haiti.