



Reporting Period: August-November

UNICEF Suriname Humanitarian Situation Report #1 Droughts



for every child

HIGHLIGHTS OF SITUATION

- **The prolonged drought in Suriname has depleted natural water sources**, forcing communities to rely on contaminated river water, leading to widespread waterborne illnesses like diarrhea. Health facilities lack clean water, hindering medical services, while schools face disruptions due to non-functional sanitation facilities, impacting children's education and health.
- **Food insecurity has worsened due to consecutive crop failures caused by erratic weather.** Transporting food from the capital city, Paramaribo, is increasingly expensive for the communities due to high food prices and transportation costs, leading to food shortages and inadequate nutrition.
- **The scarcity of clean water is causing health care problems in Suriname's interior.** Medical Mission data shows a rise in diarrhea cases among children under five, particularly in Sipaliwini, where health facilities are under-resourced. Clinics report shortages of medical supplies, staff, and clean water, limiting their ability to care for vulnerable populations, including pregnant women and malnourished children.

SITUATION OVERVIEW AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The interior regions of Suriname are facing a rapidly escalating humanitarian crisis caused by a prolonged and severe drought. According to the NCCR report, approximately 40,600 residents across the districts of Sipaliwini, Upper Suriname, Tapanahony, and Coeroeni have been severely affected, with most of these communities relying almost exclusively on rainwater and rivers for drinking, farming, and daily activities. This prolonged drought has drastically reduced water levels, rendering these sources insufficient or unsafe for use. The situation is compounded by the remote nature of these communities, limited infrastructure, and high transportation costs, creating a multifaceted crisis affecting water, food, health, and education systems. Vulnerable

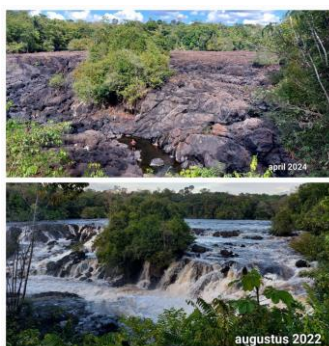


Image taken from De Vliegende

Situation in Numbers

People Affected: 40,600

Estimation on the total number of persons affected:

Children in Need (CIN):
- 38% of children under 18 years

- **People in Need (PIN):**
- 30% of women of reproductive age
- 10% elderly (60+ years)

Overall, an estimation of 70% of the inhabitants in the Affected Area need **Humanitarian Assistance (28,420)**

General Overview of the Affected Areas:

Upper Suriname
Villages: 52
Population: 24,768

Tapanahony
Villages :87
Population:13,380

Coeroeni
Villages: 5
Population: 2,452

Funding needs (estim.):
600k-700k

populations, including children, pregnant women, and the elderly, face heightened risks of malnutrition, and poor hygiene due to the lack of adequate access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and sufficient healthcare.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF INTENDED PROGRAMME RESPONSE

In response, UNICEF and its partners, implemented a range of interventions to mitigate the effects of the drought to address immediate and long-term needs:

- **Emergency Water and Food Distribution:** Bottled water and food parcels, transported via air and boats to remote villages, with further distribution managed by local authorities and community leaders and strategic hubs to ensure efficient delivery to surrounding communities.
- **WASH Initiatives:** Upgrading WASH facilities in villages, clinics, and schools which aims to improve access to clean water and proper sanitation. Hygiene promotion campaigns and educational materials deployed to raise community awareness.



Interventions in Upper land Indigenous Amerindian region, specifically in the villages Pelele Tepu and Curuni.

Intended Impact of the Response

- Immediate relief through food and water distribution to the most vulnerable populations.
- Reduction in waterborne illnesses through enhanced WASH infrastructure and hygiene education.
- Increased resilience in communities via rainwater harvesting systems, gender-sensitive facilities, and health education.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- Remote locations with limited infrastructure pose challenges to transportation and distribution, according to the NCCR report, access to many areas requires air or boat transport, and infrastructure in these communities are to some extent underdeveloped, complicating the delivery of essential services.
- Insufficient funding and supplies hinder the scale of interventions, Suriname's faces unique challenges due to its geographical location, being part of both the Amazon Basin and the Caribbean, difficulties may arise in terms of aligning with regional funding streams.
- Sustained behavior change in hygiene and sanitation practices requires ongoing support and monitoring.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUED RESPONSE

To address the crisis in Suriname's interior, it is essential to expand WASH interventions by increasing access to clean water through additional storage tanks and water purification systems. Hygiene promotion/health campaigns should also be implemented to educate communities on safe water handling and sanitation practices.

Healthcare systems should be strengthened by deploying more mobile health teams, supplying medical resources to clinics, and focusing on malnutrition and waterborne diseases. Increase investment in water storage and rainwater harvesting systems. Additionally, it is essential to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of intervention outcomes; along with advocating for additional funding to close resource gaps and increase humanitarian efforts.

FUNDING OVERVIEW AND PARTNERSHIPS

Based on preliminary assessments, the estimated financial requirement to address the drought's impact is approximately \$600,000–\$700,000. This budget would cover the following areas:

- Transportation of food and water to remote villages.
- Upgrading WASH facilities in schools, clinics, and communities.
- Deploying mobile health teams and procuring medical supplies.
- Implementing rainwater harvesting and water purification systems.
- Conducting hygiene education and community health campaigns.

Efforts to Mobilize Resources

In order, to effectively address the ongoing drought crisis, resource mobilization efforts must target both immediate relief and long-term resilience-building. Leveraging regional mechanisms, despite current funding constraints.

Therefore, collaboration with regional partners and broader Amazon Basin initiatives as those in Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia can increase visibility and potentially unlock cross-border funding opportunities. Additionally, partnerships with private sector donors, international NGOs, and development agencies should be pursued to secure financial and logistical support. Highlighting the high-impact nature of interventions, including WASH infrastructure improvements and targeted health responses, can attract donors invested in both emergency relief and sustainable development goals.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Information sourced from the NCCR Report (22/11/2024) and the Medical Mission Report (10/10/2024).