

FLOODING IN SURINAME

Situation Report No. 1



24 MAY 2022, 1700 SRT

HIGHLIGHTS

- Suriname has been experiencing heavy rainfall since the start of 2022 which has caused severe flooding in some areas.
- The National Coordination Centre for Disaster Management (NCCR) indicated that the situation in the interior of country was worsening as the latest reports showed that the water level was rising as the rains continued.
- A total of about 2,000 persons were directly affected with some 1466 persons being displaced according to NCCR. There were no reports of deaths.
- Some clinics have been flooded, including the staff quarters.
- The Ministry of Health and the Medical Mission were both contacted by PAHO Suriname.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Suriname has been experiencing an extended rainy season since the start of the year and on 24 March 2022, a report was received from the National Coordinating Centre for Disasters (NCCR) which indicated that from 7 March 2022 reports were received of flooding in the following affected areas:
 - Basin of the Upper Saramacca River/Matawai Area
 - Basin of the Marowijne River (Paramaccanarea)
 - Tapanahony area
 - River basin of the Lawa River
 - Upper Suriname river area
 - Albina, Moengo
 - Southern part of Suriname (Tepu, Apetina and Palumeu)
 - Para
- This affected the daily life of the local population, especially in the areas of housing, food, education and sanitary conditions. A total of about 2,000 persons were directly affected with some 1466 persons being displaced. There were no reports of deaths.
- Access to many of the communities by road or plane was not possible. Agricultural plots were also flooded. At the time of the report, the water had started to recede in some areas.
- The rainy season has continued and the main area affected now is the area in Brokopondo around the Afobaka dam as water has been released from the dam periodically to manage the water level.
- The NCCR indicated that the situation in the interior of Suriname was worsening as the latest reports showed that the water level was rising as the rains continued. In the Tapanahony area and areas near the Marowijne River, data indicated that water level in several villages was rising, as well as that several medical facilities were also flooded at the time. Furthermore, Amerindian villages in the far south of Suriname had requested additional food assistance due to the fact that agricultural plots were flooded and crops cannot be used. The districts of Paramaribo and Wanica were also flooded. While many inquiries were on the area of Brokopondo, the NCCR has requested that the response not be limited to Brokopondo but be extended to other affected areas as well..

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

Affected
2,000



Deaths
0



Damaged
TBC



Missing
0



Displaced



1,466



Source:

NCCR Situation Report, 24 May 2022.

HEALTH SITUATION

- It was reported that a couple of the clinics serving some of the areas were flooded and that clinics were out of medication. However, the Ministry of Health has been addressing the issue regarding the medication. There were also anecdotal reports of increased cases of diarrhea and respiratory conditions. The Medical Mission, however, was not aware of any increase in these diseases above the expected rates for that time of the year. Investigation is currently ongoing.
- The Medical Mission also reported that although some clinic staff were affected by the flood, they had cleaned up the facilities and continued providing services including house to house visits via boats.

NEEDS

- The NCCR developed a Needs list (see attached) and the main needs identified were as follows:
 - Cleaning items – bleach, soap powder, liquid hand soap, liquid cleaner, garbage bags
 - Food items – peas, beans, peanut butter, powdered milk, macaroni, noodles
 - Child care kits- diaper and wipes
 - School supplies- notebooks, pens, pencils, lunch boxes, school bags, water bottles etc.
 - Shelter supplies- battery operated lamps, bed nets
 - Transportation- boats, engines, diesel fuel
 - Hygiene kits- soap, deodorant, sanitary napkins, toothbrush, toothpaste
 - Water storage containers
 - Personnel
 - Sandbags
 - Money

CONTEXT

Suriname has been experiencing an extended rainy season since the start of the year and flooding since 24 March 2022. The rainy season has continued and the main area affected now is the area in Brokopondo around the Afobaka dam as water has been released from the dam periodically to manage the water level. The NCCR indicated that the situation in the interior of Suriname was worsening as the latest reports showed that the water level was rising as the rains continued.

RESPONSE ACTIONS

PAHO/WHO

- A discussion with the Director of Health was made to determine areas of possible support and none were identified. The indication was that it was being addressed.
- A dialogue with the Medical Mission which provides health care to the affected area was done. No immediate needs were identified except for technical support for developing a contingency plan and to address future needs for WASH.
- The situation and the NCCR needs list were discussed internally in the different levels of PAHO (country, subregional and HQ) and it was agreed that focus of support will be on the health needs identified by the Medical Mission.
- In 2021 there was a similar situation with the flooding and PAHO Suriname supported the NCCR with bleach in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

GOVERNMENT

- NCCR has been responding to the needs of the affected communities in terms of food packages, water storage containers, bottled water and other supplies
- The President, Vice President, various ministries and other sectors as well as the private sector visited some affected areas and support has been provided.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a request to the UN seeking support and shared the needs list prepared by the NCCR.

UN

- The UN convened a meeting on 17 May with the head of the NCCR to obtain a status report and determine the current needs.
- The UN agencies are providing support through their respective counterparts such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Natural Resources. The assistance planned includes food packages, school supplies, hygiene kits, vegetable seeds/plants, water storage containers, capacity building, training, risk assessment etc.

OTHER PARTNERS:

- On 13 May, the Suriname Red Cross Society developed a Fact Sheet - Floods 2022 which details the damage and needs assessment they conducted from 29 April to 1 May 2022 in the district of Brokopondo. The assessment covered the areas of shelter, health, WASH, and livelihoods and basic needs.