Flood in Belen

Dear Amazon Promise Family,

On occasion there is a special circumstance which prompts us to reach out for extra support. Sometimes it is additional care required for a patient, a necessary operation or provisions for a family, and at other times, it is a broader situation. 2012 has already proven to be a challenging year. In February, an enormous oil and chemical fire engulfed the historic block of our Iquitos office and burned for three days. Luckily our office was spared the flames. However we did have smoke damage and property loss – both of which could have been much worse had it not been for the heroic actions of our Peruvian AP staff and their families and friends who emptied out the entire office onto the street during the night (not one cup or saucer was left) while the smoke billowed in.

From Fire to Water

But that, apparently, was not enough. Soon after we repaired and moved back into the Iquitos office, the river began to rise. By the end of March, the Amazon and its tributaries had reached alarming levels. And now, at the end of April, flooding has reached a critical stage. Our Belen Clinic – built two stories high on stilts to withstand floods – is underwater. What is more, all of lower Belen and Iquitos is underwater. The Amazon River has risen all the way to Malecón, flooding all of the houses and displacing tens of thousands of people. From already squalid conditions, families have now been forced into an even worse situation, sleeping under tents, cardboard and makeshift shelters in front of Amazon Promise and in the streets. The government has not provided sufficient assistance. Leptospirosis is on the rise. Garbage and feces are piling up, and there are water and food shortages -- not to mention jobs lost, families torn apart, and children and babies sleeping on filthy streets.

We would like to salute Dawn on the Amazon restaurant owner and good friend Bill Grimes and his wife Marmelita who have been on the front lines of this disaster providing food, water and other basic needs to those in the midst of this crisis. Amazon Promise has also been helping the newly displaced with medical care despite our clinic being underwater. But we can do more; we need to do more. And we need your help. We urgently need donations to purchase medicine, food, potable water and other basic necessities and distribute them to those who are suffering. I know that we can’t mitigate the entire situation, but as you all know Amazon Promise does a lot with a little. Please give what you can.

Thank You for your support,

Patty Webster
President
We are asking for your tax-deductible donation via Paypal:

http://amazonpromise.org/index.php/donate/donate

Or by mailing a check to:

Amazon Promise  
PO BOX 1304  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Makeshift ‘Tent City’ in the streets of Iquitos is now home to thousands of already poor

‘Homes’ thought to be above the flood line now ruined and soaking in sewage

Our Belen Clinic: Before (top), and now (bottom)

Clinic’s composting toilet and water filtration system flooded by water and sewage