The MFEWS

erican Food Security Early Warning Syste Mesoamericano de Alerta Temprana para

Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

For

October 9 – October 15, 2008

2) Rains tapered off in Honduras during the October 2 – 8 observation period providing a needed break to the rising water levels along the Ulua and Chamelecon River basins in western Honduras. These basins have primarily affected the departments of Ocotepeque, Copan Santa Barbara, and Cortes in Honduras, as well as the Zacapa department of Guatemala. Heavy rains are expected to return during the October 9 – 15 period. 3) Heavy rains in northwestern Nicaragua have led to the displacement of approximately 3000 people and have destroyed coffee, banana and fruit plantations. 1) During September localized flooding and damage to maize crops occurred in southern Guatemala, across parts of the Escuintla, Santa Rosa, Jutiapa and El Progresso departments. In addition to this, October 4 – 8 brought heavy rains to western El Salvador and southern Guatemala. These rains were caused by an area of low pressure situated south of El Salvador that has the potential to develop into a tropical system within the next 48 hours. It will likely bring excessive rains, thunderstorms, and strong surf to the pacific coast of El Salvador and Guatemala as it moves westward.

Hazards Assessment Text Explanation:

According to the National Hurricane Center, as of 8:00 am EST October 8th, a near stationary low pressure system situated approximately 130 miles west of Nicaragua is causing heavy showers and thunderstorms. This area has the potential to develop into a tropical depression by October 10th as atmospheric conditions become more favorable. The system is moving slowly in a west-northwestward direction and at present is not expected to make landfall. **See Figure 1.**

According to INSIVUMEH, in Guatemala there are multiple rivers that are registering very high levels and have the potential to continue rising due to excessive rains. These rivers are: Ostua in Asuncion Mita, Jutiapa; Motagua in San Agustín Acasaguastlán, El Progreso, Gualán, Zacapa and Morales, Izabal; Coyolate River in Patulul, Suchitepéquez; Polochic river in Panzós, Alta Verapaz; Chixoy river in Chisec, Alta Verapaz; Paz in Ciudad Pedro de Alvarado, Jutiapa; and La Pasion in La Libertad, Petén. The risk of flash flooding and landslides remains in these areas also.

