

*PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, Oct 20, CMC – The Trinidad and Tobago government Saturday said teams were working to rescue people trapped by floods and landslides caused by heavy rains here over the past 48 hours and that the full extent of the damage caused will be revealed as the water subsides in the coming days.*

*“This is a national disaster, the flooding is quite widespread and quite severe and it is going to cost a lot of money to bring relief to people who have been affected. Notwithstanding whatever shortages we are experiencing we will have to find the resources to help,” Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley said after touring some of the affected areas.*

*The Met Office said that an active ITCZ continues to produce periods of rain/showers and thunderstorm activity which can lead to flash or riverine flooding as well as landslides/landslips in areas so prone. Gusty winds can be experienced in the vicinity of heavy downpours.*

### **Animal Welfare Network Flood Relief Effort 2018**

The flooding in the rainy season of 2018 caused great distress to several communities in Trinidad and affected the animals that live in these areas including companion animals, such as dogs, cats and birds but also livestock, ducks and chickens. Apart from the direct impact of the floods which resulted in drowning, injuries and disappearance, the ability of residents to look after their own needs and the needs of their animals was also affected.

The Animal Welfare Network (AWN) mounted an immediate response to distress calls from Kelly Village and St Helena entering Kelly Village before the flood waters had receded, following reports of stranded animals, and situations where owners had to leave their homes and were unable to take their animals. After an initial assessment of the situation, we issued a call to our supporters to assist us in gathering resources, mainly animal feed, to supply residents who had lost everything. In addition, we approached Shelters and Veterinary Clinics with boarding facilities, to take in and temporarily house animals from the affected areas.

We partnered in this effort with Dr Shivana Beharry of Golden Pride Vet Clinic in Tunapuna who took the lead in offering accommodation to 57 dogs and 13 cats and provided us with local knowledge of the area, through her contacts, and a suitable central location from which to operate. Donations of food were brought to this central location and bagged out by volunteers for distribution by our teams who went from house to house in the affected areas of Kelly Village, St Helena, and Sangre Grande. We were fortunate to have reliable contacts in Sangre Grande, Warrentville and Debe and supplies were passed on to them to handle distribution in areas that we were unable to cover.

We were shocked and distressed at the extent of the devastation and losses experienced in these communities as we spoke to residents and handed out an initial two week supply of food for each animal. We were also amazed at the care and concern that so many residents

expressed for their pets and animals in their care. Some had ensured that their animals were safe with friends or family in unaffected areas, others did their best to ensure that their animals were saved from drowning. We met one resident in Kelly Village who took his goats into his home and settled them on his dining table to keep them safe until the water receded. He was grateful for the sack of feed we left for him.

Where we came across cases of injured, sick or lost animals, we did our best to assist by calling on a team of volunteer veterinarians or taking the animal in for veterinary care and housing.

We were overwhelmed with the response from supporters and the concerned public as large quantities of dog and cat food poured into donation centres and donated funds were used to buy animal feed for sheep, goats, pigs and chickens. We estimate that at least 2500 animals received a two week supply of food.

In addition, in response to concerns by the T&T Veterinary Association about the potential for an outbreak of Leptospirosis, we partnered with volunteer veterinarians to set up and run three free vet clinics at locations in St Helena, Kelly Village and Warrentville to examine, vaccinate and treat animals in the area.

**Thank you all for your generous donations of food, money, professional expertise and time.**

We are especially grateful to Dr Shivana Beharry and Golden Pride Veterinary Clinic for partnering with us in this effort, for housing so many animals, and for providing us with a central location for food bagging and distribution.

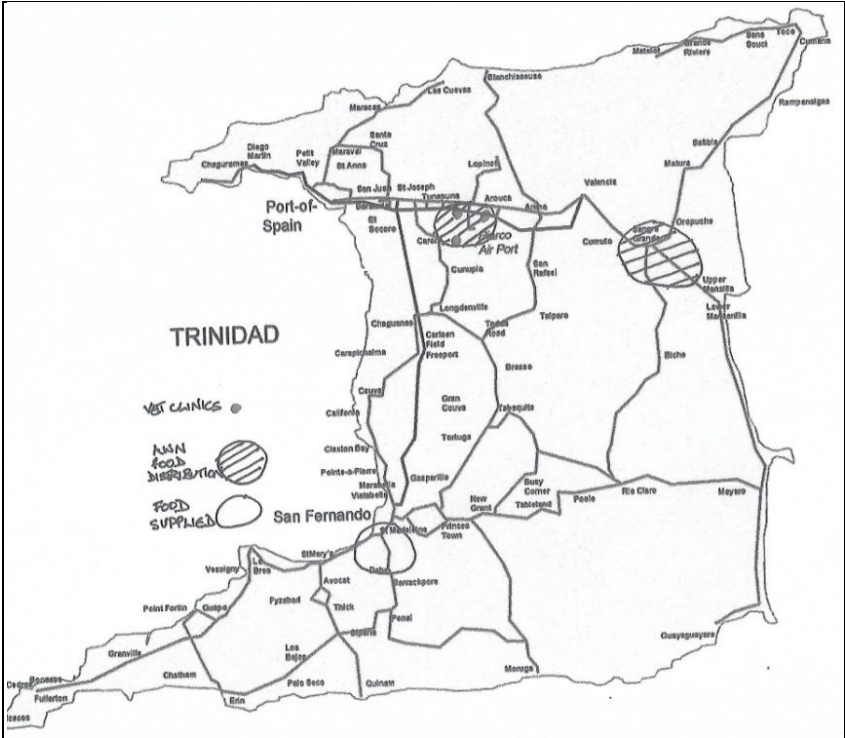
For donations of dog and cat food, we are very grateful to pet food supplier, Vemco Ltd, for their generous donations, to Melanie Waddell of the Travel Centre, The T&T Veterinary Association and to Melanie Hadden of Karcher Canada Inc., who took the initiative to collect donations either in the form of food or cash, and to all those here in Trinidad and Tobago, and abroad who supported this effort, or volunteered their time to assist with food distribution. There were so many supporters and concerned persons who donated food, money and their time that we cannot mention them all, but please be assured that your donations were well received in the affected communities.

Thanks also go to all those who supported the free vet clinics, some through funds to purchase vaccines, wormers and other drugs, and others such as A&D Mart who facilitated the St Helena Clinic and Councillor Samuel Sankar who facilitated the Warrentville Clinic. We are so grateful to all the vets who gave freely of their time to examine and treat animals in need.

The members of the Management Committee of AWN went all out to implement the relief effort, but we are especially grateful to Kathleen Calliste and to Dr Roger Braithwaite for their

hard work on the ground organising food distribution, and coordination of the community vet clinics.

**Flooded areas serviced by AWN food distribution and sites of vet clinics**



**A few of the many rescues given temporary shelter**





**Gathering, sorting and delivering flood relief**



**Help Fill Their Bowls**



**the ANIMAL WELFARE network**

The Animal Welfare Network is in urgent need of pet food donations due to the intake of many displaced animals from the floods.

**DOG FOOD / CAT FOOD / RABBIT FOOD**

Please drop off at:

**The Travel Centre Ltd**  
16 Damian Street, Woodbrook  
Contact Melanie at 684-6357 for more details.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS!**



**AWN Free Vet Clinics at three sites**

