

Situation Report 13 – Caribbean Hurricane Season 11 September 2008

This situation report is based on information received from, the UN Emergency Technical Team (UNETT) in the affected countries, the Regional Office in Panama and the National Hurricane Centre. This situation report covers the effects of Hurricanes “Gustav”, “Hanna” and “Ike” in the Caribbean.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In Haiti, some 170, 780 families have been affected and the main challenge continues to be distribution of relief items to the beneficiaries. Urgent support to the Flash Appeal is required.
- In Cuba, 4 deaths and extensive damage are reported.
- In Turks and Caicos, the state of emergency was declared in Grand Turk Island, South Caicos Island and Salt Cay.

Caribbean Hurricane Season (as of 10 Sep 2008)



SITUATION

1. **Hurricane “Ike”** is now a *Category 2* hurricane and, after crossing over Cuba, is moving towards the north western Gulf of Mexico. “Ike” is expected to become a major hurricane prior to reaching the cost line and is likely to hit Texas and Louisiana in the United States.

2. The vulnerability throughout the Caribbean countries has increased dramatically with another 3 months left before the end of the hurricane season. The region has been affected since 15 August successively by tropical storm Fay, hurricanes “Gustav”, “Hanna” and “Ike” that claimed in the Caribbean more than 345 lives so far.

HAITI

3. According to the Direction de la protection Civile, (DPC), 337 people have been confirmed dead and some 170,780 families have been affected as a result of tropical storms Fay, Hanna, Gustav and Ike. Some areas in the Southern Departments have still not been accessed. In Artibonite, the DPC considers Gonaives, Grand Saline and Desdunes as the priority areas.

4. Relief operations continue with efforts focusing on the most affected area of the city of **Gonaives** where an estimated 80,000 people remain in temporary shelters. Distribution of water remains the main challenge due to the lack of available transport capacity. Local authorities plan to set up strategic distribution points with the positioning of bladder tanks. The affected areas in the **Southern department** (Tiburon to Les Cayes) and the **South Eastern** department (Cotes de Fer, Cayes, Jacmel), which are still partly inaccessible, are a further priority. Members of the UNDAC team have been deployed to Les Cayes, to assess the situation in surrounding affected areas.

5. The main challenge continues to be distribution of relief items to beneficiaries. The capacity of implementing partners involved in the distribution of assistance is limited. Security concerns also hamper a swift distribution of assistance. Furthermore, the number of beneficiaries tends to increase exponentially, once aid is about to be delivered, posing a significant challenge to plan for an adequate amount of aid to be distributed.

6. During the past two days, coordination between cluster leads and with the government has been further strengthened. The Humanitarian Coordinator requested an analysis of each cluster lead on achievements, priorities and gaps in each area. Further meetings to ensure complementarity and coordination between clusters will be held on a regular basis. On 10 September, Prime Minister Michele Pierre-Louis convened a meeting with the DSRSG/RC/HC to take stock of the disaster relief operations implemented by the international community in response to the humanitarian crisis. The meeting was attended by several members of her cabinet, including –among others- the Minister of Planning and External Cooperation, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Public Works, the Minister of Education and the Secretary of State for Public Security. Priority actions to be undertaken jointly by the Government and humanitarian agencies were also defined.

7. The UN Disaster Assessment Coordination (UNDAC) dispatched one additional staff to Gonaives to strengthen its seven-member team already on the ground in support of humanitarian coordination. At the local level, **UNDAC** teams (currently in Gonaives and Les Cayes) have the responsibility for humanitarian coordination on behalf of the HC. As soon as longer-term resources are available, these teams will be replaced by OCHA or staff from the RC/HC Office. MINUSTAH is coordinating its operations with the US Navy ship dispatched to provide logistic support for aid distributions. The Emergency Relief Coordinator will launch the Haiti Flash Appeal, requesting USD 107 million, in New York on 12 September.

Road Conditions

8. In view of the conditions of roads and bridges, logistics for the relief operation are particularly challenging. According to UNDSS, movements by road from Gonaives to Port au Prince and from Saint Marc to Port au Prince are still prohibited due to flooding and collapsed bridges. The road from Ennery to Gonaives, from Cap Haitian to Hinche, and



from Port de Paix to Gonaives are equally prohibited for UN staff movement. The Road from Port au Prince to Les Cayes through Miragoane is hardly accessible, since the bridge at Grand Goave is reportedly at the verge of collapsing. Access from Port au Prince to Jacmel and from Jeremie to Les Cayes is possible by road, however, caution is required.

Sectoral/ Cluster coordination

9. The following coordination structure is currently operational in Haiti:

Sector/cluster	Governmental institutions	Lead agency (UN and partners)
Agriculture	MARNDR	FAO
Coordination and support services	MPCE	OCHA
Early recovery	MPCE	UNDP
Education	MEFP	UNICEF
Food assistance	CNSA	WFP
Health	MSPP	PAHO/WHO
Logistics		WFP
Protection		UNICEF
Shelter and Non-food items	MAST/DPC	IOM
Water and sanitation	DPSPE/MSPP	UNICEF

10. While assessments are still ongoing, there is a clearly identified need to reinforce the national capacity and existing coordination structures. The country team has requested support from global clusters in the following four areas: Logistics (WFP), Water & Sanitation (UNICEF), Shelter and Non-Food Items (IOM) and Early Recovery (UNDP) and cluster leads in Haiti have already been in touch with their respective Headquarters to request reinforcements in these areas.

Shelter and non-food items

11. According to the DPC, the distribution of shelters throughout the country is the following:

Artibonite	150 shelters
Centre	3 shelters
Grand Anse	5 shelters
Nippe	3 shelters
North	No information
North East	No shelters
North West	12 shelters
West	16 shelters
South	6 shelters
South East	5 shelters

12. The Shelter and non-food item cluster considers Gonaives, the Southern department (Tiburon to Cayes) and the South Eastern department (Cotes de Fer, Cayes, Jacmel) as priority areas of intervention. A high priority is also the coastal area between Port de Paix/ Chansolme (North West) and Borgne (North). The situation in isolated areas in the Centre and West, such as Hinche and Grand Goave, still needs to be assessed.



13. According to the DPC, some 80,000 to 90,000 people are currently in temporary shelters, out of which 48,000 are in Gonaïves. These numbers tend to vary considerably, since distribution points for food and water are mostly located in temporary shelters. In some cases, the shelter population grows temporarily from some 1,000 to 5,000 people.

14. In the shelters, water and sanitation are lacking, while all age and gender groups are mixed, creating protection concerns. The shelters are also vulnerable to rain. More than half of the temporary shelters are located in schools. As the school year will resume on 8 October, the shelter cluster, in cooperation with the government, is identifying alternative temporary shelters and continues to work on ensuring a minimal standard of security and sanitation.

15. Since “Hanna” hit Haiti, IOM has provided aid to some 7,000 families. Contributions have been made by Canada, the European Union, USA, Japan and Spain. On 11 September, the United States will deliver non-food items by air, for some 7,000 families. Furthermore, IOM is currently purchasing non-food items for an additional 13,000 families. Most purchases are being made either locally or in Panama. Currently, a significant number of hygiene kits are available; however, there is a lack of kitchen kits and plastic sheeting.

16. Up to date, some 50% of the NFIs have been distributed in Gonaïves, the other 50% have been allocated to the rest of the country. From this week onwards, Gonaïves will receive some 75% of relief items, whereas the South department will receive 25% (possibly from a humanitarian hub in Les Cayes). IOM and CRS will open a warehouse in Gonaïves in addition to their joint warehouse in Port au Prince.

Health

17. With the exception of Gonaïves, hospitals and the health infrastructure has not been heavily affected by the hurricane season. However, due to limited access by road as well as the scarcity of fuel, the provision of health services and medical supplies is interrupted particularly in the South (Aquin, Camp Perin, and Port a Piment to Tiburon), the South East (Cote de Fer, Bainet, Bellance), Nippes, Artibonite and in the North West (particularly from Jean Rabel to Bombardopolis and on the island of la Tortue).

18. The lack of access to clean drinking water is the main threat and could result in water-borne diseases and alter the nutritional status of the affected population. In the mid-term, the scarcity of clean water could lead to an increase in malaria and dengue within three weeks, particularly in the southern departments, which are been flooded for the past three weeks.

19. The emergency response of the health sector is structured according to the following components:

- Needs assessments and a strengthening of health centres with national PAHO/WHO staff as well as the Cuban brigade in the South, South East, West, Artibonite and North West.
- Provision of mobile clinics in the departments of Grand Anse and West, Artibonite and support surgical units in Gonaïves.
- A standard form has been developed by the PAHO/WHO, CDC and the Ministry of Health to improve epidemiological assessments.
- National frameworks will be strengthened with support from PAHO/WHO to contain infectious diseases.

20. The following medical supplies have been distributed:

- 2 kits 1 000 for Médecin du Monde France (mobile clinic in Jérémie area)
- 2 kits 1 000 for Médecin du Monde Canada (mobile clinic in Cité Soleil)
- 1 kit 10 000 for the Ministry of Health (to reopen a health centre in Gonaïves area) : 8/09
- 2 kits 1 000 for Médecins sans Frontières (mobile clinic in Gonaïves area)
- 1 kit 10 000 for Development Initiative and Ministry of Health (for health centre in the north west region)

The prioritized geographical areas of intervention continue to be the Southern, South-eastern, North-western (Island of la Tortue) departments and Artibonite.



Food

21. Some 71,528 beneficiaries were reached and 461 MT have been distributed. This week the US military started supporting humanitarian logistics in Haiti. On 8 September, WFP dispatched a US landing craft with 120 MT of food to Gonaïves. WFP facilitated the transport of humanitarian supplies to Gonaïves for several NGOs, including MSF-France and MSF-Belgium, Oxfam GB, ACF, Spanish Red Cross, IOM and Pharmaciens Sans Frontieres. WFP offloaded both vessels in Gonaïves on 9 September and initiated distributions.

22. On 9 September WFP loaded two US landing crafts to Saint Marc. Supplies will be received by Fondation Esther Boucicault Stanislas (FEBS). In addition, WFP airlifted 15 MT of food to Les Cayes in the south and planned to airlift food to Port de Paix in the North, but flooding on the landing zone prevented the operation. Distributions are carried out by air, sea and road, when possible. Food assistance, including dry family rations and distributions in temporary shelters, has been provided by WFP with its partners Care and Caritas in the above mentioned departments and cities. World Vision has also carried out distributions in Hinche and the island of La Gonave, while CRS provided dry food rations in Les Cayes.

23. Distributed food commodities include high energy biscuits (HEB, to date a total of 32 MT), rice, beans, corn soya blend, and vegetable oil. HEBs are the most appropriate types of food in a situation where people have no access to cooking facilities. WFP is distributing 5-days rations of HEB per family.

24. Currently, there are five ongoing assessment missions to Artibonite (Gonaïves), Nippes, North West (special focus on Cabaret), South-East and Nord-East. The key findings are as follows: due to recurrent security issues in Gonaïves where looting of trucks transporting NFI was reported, WFP is distributing food assistance to beneficiaries in temporary shelters at night time; in Cabaret, some shelters remained inaccessible to WFP staff because of flooded rivers; the destruction of crops will further deteriorate the food security situation while rising food prices will increase food insecurity. Shortage of food commodities in local markets are reported in some areas.

Logistics

25. A first interagency logistics coordination meeting was held on 9 September. WFP is coordinating humanitarian logistics while also liaising with MINUSTAH. WFP is also liaising with military assets being provided by the United States, including sea and air support. Regular coordination meetings are held with WFP partners.

Education

26. On-going assessments are being conducted by MENFP (Ministry of Education and professional training) and partners in the field. Some of the initial results indicate that some 40,000 children (112 schools) have been affected in the South East, West, and Nippes departments. Identified short term actions include the complete assessment of the education sector; needs prioritization for the delivery plan; information sharing; compilation of data and coordination with MENFP in the field.

Nutrition

27. In the South, Terre des Hommes has staff available for assessments in Tiburon, Les Anglais, Nord des Caye and the area of Port Salut. Fondation St. Boniface is conducting a rapid assessment mission in Fonds des Blancs and surroundings. In Gonaïves, MSF-B has identified some moderate cases of malnutrition. Currently, there is no capacity to take action; however, an emergency team will arrive next week.

Short term actions include the identification of moderate malnutrition cases and coordination with WFP and PAHO/WHO to include these persons on food distribution lists; distribution of micro-nutrients to vulnerable population; and identification of partners for distributions/education activities mainly in the South East Department. The main challenges include coordination and the unavailability of implementing partners in the field.

Protection

28. Various assessments have been conducted by the following NGOs: AVSI, Save the Children (SE), CRS/Caritas (South, Grande Anise & Nippes), World Concern (NW), HRC (all departments). Guidelines on the protection of women



in shelters have been developed by UNIFEM/FNUAP/MCF. Short term needs include psychosocial support for affected families in shelters; sectoral assessments; human resources; assessments on the situation of prisoners, orphans and other vulnerable groups. Family reunification activities need to be undertaken.

Agriculture and Early Recovery

29. Irrigation systems have been severely affected by Gustav, Hanna and Ike. While Gustav affected the southern region of the country and damaged significant parts of the 'cultures vivieres', Hanna and Ike mostly damaged agricultural production in Artibonite. Priority actions are to rebuild the irrigation systems and to plan for a short planting cycle, in order to ensure food security in the immediate term (e.g. plant vegetables and crops which can be harvested after a short period of time).

CUBA

30. Only 8 days after the devastating passage of "Gustav", the Cuban territory has been impacted in its totality by "Ike". In the province of Pinar del Rio, the two hurricanes made landfall at a distance of only 35 kms difference and exited at practically the same point on the northern shore. Both hurricanes have severely impacted both the population and the economy of the country. "Ike" hit the Cuban territory as a Category 3 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale and exited the territory as a Category 1. In addition to strong winds, accumulated rainfall and storm surge, particularly along the length of the southern coast of Cuba, have affected the territory. Although presently the eye of "Ike" is in the Gulf of Mexico, its rain bands are bringing abundant rains. These rain bands will continue to affect the western and central zones, from Pinar del Río to Sancti-Spíritus, including the Isle of Youth, for the next 12 – 18 hours. Storm force winds in the far western part of the country can also be anticipated.

31. Across the country, as a preventative measure, some 2,615,794 people - or approximately 23% of the entire Cuban population - were evacuated, of which 21% were in shelters and 79% of evacuees in homes of friends and family. The national authorities mobilized 236 directive bodies; 1,500 food preparation centres; 2,300 shelters, 158,000 persons; 9,600 transportation vehicles, and 1,500 machinery engineering. The Cuban National Civil Defence declared the recovery phase in the provinces of Ciego de Ávila, Sancti Spíritus, Cienfuegos, Villa Clara, Matanzas, Havana, City of Havana, Pinar del Río, the Special Municipality of the Isle of Youth, and the rest of the municipalities of Granma provinces. However, as a result of the torrential rains in Pinar del Rio, the Provincial Civil Defence Council decided to maintain the Alarm phase.

32. The preliminary effects of the hurricane continue to be reported and will be complemented by the damage assessment conducted by Cuban authorities. The Executive Council of the National Civil Defence reported the death of 4 persons. In addition, 20 people are reported injured in the central and western provinces. Most of the country does not have electricity and has suffered losses in the housing, communications, economic, goods and agriculture sectors. The damages in agriculture are described as substantial. With the impact widespread in the whole country, the possibilities of assistance and solidarity from one province to the other (as occurred for Pinar del Rio and Isla de la Juventud) will be limited. Early recovery will be a challenge.

33. Mexico, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela have already offered their support. The United Nations System (UN) has offered its assistance to the Government and is organizing a meeting with donors and the international cooperation on 13 September where results from preliminary assessments will be presented. The Country Team of the United Nations in Cuba and the UNETE continue to closely follow the current situation and work towards a preliminary evaluation of the severe effects. The United Nations System has mobilized USD 1.03 million in support for the recovery process: OCHA (100,000 USD), UNDP (100,000 USD), UNFPA (50,000 USD), UNICEF (280,000 USD) and WFP (500,000 USD).

34. Cash donations can be made at:

Account Number: 033473

Banco Financiero Internacional

Account name: MINVEC huracanes restauración de daños



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

35. Low pressure has continued to bring heavy rain to some southern and central areas of the Dominican Republic over the last two days, long after Hurricane Ike has passed, and has caused increased flooding and overflow of several rivers in the south and south west of the country. As a result, some 5,400 people are in 54 official temporary shelters and 11,324 are staying with friends and family. In the north, the area nearest to the passage of the eye of "Ike" escaped serious damage and the situation is reported as being back to normal. However, the provinces of Barahona and San Jose de Ocoa were seriously affected. Communities in the area of the Cabral Lagoon have been flooded and several other communities in these provinces are cut off by flooded roadways due to overflowing rivers, damaged bridges or roads blocked by landslides. There has been extensive damage to standing crops in these two provinces.

36. Some 3,297 homes were affected by floodwaters, and 50 were destroyed. The Ministry of Health is monitoring the possible outbreaks of leptospirosis and dengue. The Emergency services (Civil Defense, Plan Social de la Presidencia, Comedores Económicos, Red Cross) are providing food rations and other items to the affected population. The Ministry of Public Works is clearing locked roads and is repairing bridges. The National Emergency Authorities (COE) have declared that there will be no emergency declaration or need for assistance for the time being. The UNCT continues to monitor developments closely through the UNETE and maintains contact with partners at national level and in affected areas to assess situation more accurately and determine any need for interventions or support.

BAHAMAS AND TURKS AND CAICOS

37. The Government of Turks and Caicos declared the state of emergency in 3 districts, Grand Turk Island, South Caicos Island and Salt Cay. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) is completing its damage assessment. The Local Red Cross society supported by the British Red Cross is delivering relief items to the affected persons in Grand Turks as initial assessments indicate that 6,000-8,000 people are affected in Grand Turks. Grand Turk suffered approximately 85% of damage to housing and infrastructure of which 20-30% is major. The airport and port have sustained major damages and logistical and coordination support is required. In South Caicos and Salt Cay, the US Coast Guard indicates that the assistance is required.

38. The national response is being coordinated by the Disaster Office TCI under the Minister for Home Affairs and Public and Public Safety which under the state of emergency is reporting to the Governor of TCI. The UNDAC team completed a fly-over of the affected islands to conduct initial UNDAC assessment and identify environmental impact. The UNICEF assessment team returns from Grand Turks indicating that the hospital is damaged and stocks of medical supplies have been destroyed. Additionally all schools in Grand Turk are damaged. DFID has begun an assessment mission to Grand Turks Island. The US Coast Guard has deployed 3 helicopters based in Provo to support transport of relief items and personnel. The British Guard Ship, the HMS Iron Duke, has responded to the emergency and is presently in the Grand Turk providing support to the Department of Disaster and Emergencies.

REGIONAL RESPONSE

39. The OCHA Regional Office in Panama is closely monitoring the situation and is in close contact with the RCs and UNETEs of the affected countries in the region. More information can be found on Reliefweb at www.reliefweb.int and REDHUM at www.redhum.org. More information on the hurricanes and storms can be found at <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>.

40. Humanitarian organisations and donors are encouraged to report all contributions (cash and in-kind) to OCHA's Financial Tracking Service at fts@reliefweb.int or through the on-line contribution form at www.reliefweb.int/fts, where a list of already made contributions is available.



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