This report is produced by OCHA Haiti in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the situation on 22 August. The next report will be issued on or around 23 August.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- Tropical Storm Laura is expected to reach Haiti on Saturday evening, 22 August, moving from the Nord-Est department through the Artibonite and the Nord-Ouest departments.

- Heavy rains and strong winds are expected during the night and throughout Sunday, with a high likelihood of flash floods, floods and landslides. An estimated 2 million people may be affected by heavy rains.

- The General Directorate for Civil Protection (DGPC) has activated the National Disaster and Risk Management Plan with alert level of ‘orange’.

- Humanitarian partners are preparing to respond to potential impacts, under the leadership of the Government of Haiti.
SITUATION OVERVIEW

Tropical Storm Laura is expected to reach Haiti on Saturday evening, 22 August, bringing heavy rains up to 200 mm in some parts of the country during the night and throughout Sunday with gusts of wind that my reach up to 60 km/h. The storm is forecast to enter Haiti through the Nord-Est department, and exit by the Nord-Ouest department after passing through the Artibonite department.

According to the Haitian Hydrometeorological Unit (UHM), the departments most at risk of heavy rainfall are the Sud-Est and North-Ouest. According to analysis by OCHA, the Ouest and Sud departments and parts of the Artibonite department may also be at high risk (see map above). Approximately 2 million people are expected to be affected by heavy rainfall. The storm is currently moving at a speed of 33 km/h, and should pass the Haitian territory relatively quickly. Nevertheless, there is a high likelihood of flash floods, floods and landslides, including in urban areas.

PREPAREDNESS AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

On Friday, 21 August, the Haitian General Directorate of Civil Protection (DGPC) and the Permanent Secretariat for the Disaster and Risk Management (SPGRD), together with the UHM, have activated the national disaster and risk management plan (Plan National de Gestion des Risques et des Désastres) with alert level of ‘orange’. The National Emergency Operations Centre (COUN) has also been activated and met virtually on Friday and Saturday. The DGPC has activated its coordination structures and alerted its teams across the country. The COUN’s Information Management Unit, in collaboration with OCHA, is monitoring the situation and is on standby to receive, consolidate and analyse reports on the potential impact of the storm. Departmental health focal points have also been alerted and the prepositioning of essential medical supplies is underway.

The DGPC has alerted citizens in areas at-risk have through SMS and social media and will continue to share information and updates with the public. The DGPC will also contact mobile providers to ensure the continuity of communication networks during the passage of the storm.

Due to dangerous sea conditions, the Haitian Maritime and Navigation Services (SEMANAH), in collaboration with the UHM, announced the temporary suspension of all coastal shipping operations throughout the country until further notice. He northern coastal zone and the Gulf of Gonaïves. To ensure compliance, the Haitian National Police (PNH) has been requested to monitor and enforce the directive. The possible restriction of air traffic is also under discussion with the Ministry of Public Works.

The decision to open emergency shelters and evacuate the population will be considered at a later stage, depending on the evolution of the situation. The Ministry of Education is currently considering the possible closure of schools, which serve as emergency shelters. Emergency Evacuation Coordinators are on standby across the country, and are also charged with overseeing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in emergency shelters (such as masks and hand-washing facilities).

OCHA is coordinating with humanitarian partners to map current operational response capacities, in preparation for a possible response. Prepositioned stocks, including food and non-food items, are available in at-risk areas, including masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19. WHO deployed teams to the North and South departments on Saturday to preposition medical kits. Transport and storage services are available to support a possible response. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) helicopter, will be available as of Sunday, depending on weather conditions.

The DGPC and partners are planning a joint initial assessment mission by helicopter on Monday. Other partners have teams on standby for possible assessment missions as of Monday.

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