



**HAITI:  
SITUATION REPORT # 24  
Tropical Storm Hanna, Gustav, Ike update  
21 October 2008**

**OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION**

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes will visit Haiti this Thursday and Friday to review the response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the storms that recently hit the country.

During his visit, Holmes will meet with Haitian leaders and representatives of the UN system and non-governmental organizations. He will also visit the city of Gonaïves, which was devastated by the hurricanes.

Today's national weather bulletin shows that the Western Caribbean is under the influence of a weak front localized over Cuba. However, a mass of dry and stable air is limiting rainfall over Haiti both today and tomorrow. There is a chance of isolated rain in the North, North-East, Centre and West Departments.

**Update on relief efforts:**

**Shelter and Non-Food Items:** Shelter materials are still a priority. However, despite the ongoing coordinated efforts, no significant gains on gaps have been achieved. The following needs remain to be covered: 83,153 tarpaulins, 100,281 plastic sheeting, 70,345 sheets and blankets, 92,744 sleeping mats, 123,290 mosquito nets, 95,759 tools, 93,288 hygiene kits, and 72,556 cooking kits.

**Food:** As of 21 October, WFP has distributed 5,263 metric tons of food items to 525,944 direct beneficiaries including 694,456 fortnightly rations distributed to 266,670 beneficiaries in Gonaïves. The rapid family census exercise of different zones of Gonaïves is still ongoing while data entry is being done for the areas where the exercise has already been completed. New WFP rations cards will be distributed to targeted households.

**Protection:** According to information received by Handicap International from the Government of Haiti, the official statistic for disability prevalence is 10 per cent of the population; all agencies should therefore consider that 10 per cent of the affected population is also affected by disability. Handicap International works at national level with the Secretary of State for the Integration of Handicapped Persons and with RANIPH, the national network of local NGOs working with handicapped persons

**OCHA-UNICEF joint assessment:** From 15 to 17 October, OCHA and UNICEF conducted a joint field assessment mission in the South-East Department with the aim of evaluating the evolution of the situation on the ground. Among other findings, the mission revealed the following issues:

- **Water:** Water is the sector that has been the most affected by the hurricanes. A large number of water systems were affected throughout the department.
- **Agriculture:** Heavy damage was limited to very specific areas and most of the agricultural sector was already in early recovery stage. Because of the cropping cycle and raining patterns, most agricultural recovery in non-irrigated areas must happen right now. It is critical to drastically speed up the delivery of early recovery assistance to the agricultural sector otherwise the support will come too late.

## SITUATION AND RESPONSE BY CLUSTER

### **Shelter and Non-Food Items**

To complement the rapid assessment of emergency shelters completed one week ago in Gonaïves, the shelter cluster will launch an assessment focused on individual and host family setting country-wide. This exploratory tool will have the following output: define culturally preferred shelter materials used in urban and rural settings, define damage to home per department and areas, define the impact of the disaster on host family settings, define the impact of disaster on livelihoods and identify vulnerable groups and priority NFI needs. To date, shelter and kit gaps country-wide are as follows:

- 22,52% of tarpaulins needs covered; shortfall of 83,153 units
- 6.6% of plastic sheeting needs covered; shortfall of 100,281 units
- 34,5% of sheets and blankets needs covered; shortfall of 70,345 units
- 13,6% of sleeping mats needs covered; shortfall of 92,744 units
- 22,94% of mosquito net needs covered ; shortfall of 123,290 units
- 10,28% of tools needs covered; shortfall of 95,759 units
- 43.58% of hygiene kits needs covered; shortfall of 93,288 units
- 25,88% of cooking kits need covered; shortfall of 72,556 units

In light of the above, no significant gains on gaps have been identified. Shelter materials are still a priority.

According to the Shelter Cluster, tents are a 'last resort' option. Additionally, the cluster invites its partners to reflect on the following aspects before delivering tents: 1) Can existing buildings be adapted or repaired rapidly? 2) Are alternative shelters to tents possible? 3) Can people occupy existing accommodation (advocate for sheltering in place)? 4) Do existing tents need replacement? 5) Can tents be delivered in time?

### **Food**

As of 21 October, WFP has distributed 5,263 metric tons of food items to 525,944 direct beneficiaries including 694,456 fortnightly rations distributed to 266,670 beneficiaries in Gonaïves.

On 21 October, WFP/UNHAS airlifted military and ICT equipment for partners (OPS and UNDP) to the city of Fort Liberté in the North-East department as part of interagency humanitarian cargo being coordinated by the Logistic Cluster. Also, on 21 October, some 21MT were delivered to Passe Catabois in the North-West department and remaining helicopter deliveries were completed in Seguin in the South-East department.

On 20 October, some 5,800 new beneficiaries were reached in Plaisance, in the Nippes department where 13MT of food assistance was distributed. WFP partner Caritas has been distributing assistance to hurricane-affected people in areas that had till date been inaccessible. Food assistance has been delivered to Nippes department on a WFP-contracted vessel.

On 17 and 18 October, WFP/UNHAS successfully airlifted some 8MT of food commodities to Seguin, at 1,750 meters of altitude, after an unsuccessful attempt hampered by security issues. Today, some additional 21MT were airlifted, of which a part will be delivered to the community of Macary, where there is no landing area for the helicopter. These localities in the department of South-East have been inaccessible to date. Distributions to targeted beneficiaries are done by WFP partner CROSE (Coordination Regionale des Organisations du Sud-est).

In addition to the air operation, WFP deploys two 6x6 trucks in the department of South-East for food deliveries to remote areas, with difficult access by road.

The WFP-contracted CITA II vessel was loaded yesterday with some 154 metric tons of food commodities destined for the South department for targeted distributions in St Jean du Sud, Camp Perrin, Damassin and Maniche in collaboration with Caritas.

### **Gonaives**

Today's distributions include food rations to participants in FFW activities of labor-intensive works, coordinated by ILO while AMURT is currently cleaning up some 50 schools in addition to the already completed 47 schools under the FFW scheme. Additional food-for-work schemes are ongoing in Gonaives and surrounding areas in collaboration with ILO (Passereine, Bayonnais and Chemin Neuf).

WFP also distributed food to some 1,500 people located in a shelter in the neighborhood of Tarrase in collaboration with AMURT.

Fuel and food commodities were sent by road to Gonaives on 21 October to replenish the supplies. Additionally, on 20 October, a food convoy was sent by road to Gonaives with a cargo of 240 metric tons. The cargo was doubled in order to secure more supplies as the deliveries on WFP-contracted vessel MV Grace have been delayed.

Distributions to Terre Neuve were carried out on 17 and 18 October. Some 33 metric tons of food commodities have been distributed to 5,000 beneficiaries, in collaboration with AMURT. All food commodities were airlifted to the area. In addition, WFP airlifted some 16 metric tons of food-for-work activities to support labor-intensive works to rehabilitate the road linking the town to Gonaives. On 18 October, some 2,000 people received their rations against their participation in these food-for-work activities, in collaboration with AMURT.

### **Protection:**

According to information received by Handicap International from the Government of Haiti, the official statistic for disability prevalence is 10 per cent of the population; all agencies should therefore consider that 10 per cent of the affected population is also affected by disability. Handicap International works at national level with the Secretary of State for the Integration of Handicapped Persons and with RANIPH, the national network of local NGOs working with handicapped persons).

Handicap International and Atlas Logistique have been evaluating the situation of handicapped persons in the Artibonite and South Departments. The field visits covered Gonaives in the Artibonite and Les Cayes, Port a Piment, Damassin and Port Salut in the South. There are few local NGOs working with handicapped persons and moreover they do not have the resources to respond to emergency needs.

In Gonaives and in the South, many handicapped persons say their walking aids were lost or damaged (wheelchairs, crutches, white sticks, prosthesis) and that accessibility has worsened due to large quantities of mud in Gonaives and damage to infrastructure in Gonaives and in the South. Handicapped persons are traumatized by the loss of their homes and belongings. They have also lost their means of economic survival.

In Gonaives, handicapped persons are living in shelters or private houses and their living conditions are very difficult. Many are not registered with any agency and are afraid they will not receive any humanitarian aid. Distribution points pose a serious difficulty because they are too far away and the queues are long. In the South, distribution of food takes place in the main towns and handicapped persons cannot walk the long distances needed to reach the distribution points.

In light of the above situation, Handicap International recommends the following actions:

- Replacement of walking aids.

- Put in place a distribution system which will allow handicapped persons to receive humanitarian assistance (food, blankets, clothes, hygiene kits, mosquito nets).
- Special attention should be made to include handicapped persons in livelihoods rehabilitation programs (income-generation, seeds and tools distribution).
- Street-cleaning to improve access.
- Development of psychosocial projects.
- Mobile clinics operating in Gonaives should reach populations outside of the temporary shelters and the information communicated to the public in advance.
- Handicapped persons should receive special assistance to repair and rebuild their homes.

## II. COORDINATION/ASSESSMENTS

### Joint assessment (OCHA-UNICEF)

From 15 to 17 October, OCHA and UNICEF conducted a joint field assessment mission in the South East Department with the objective of evaluating the evolution of the situation on the ground. The places visited were: Jacmel, Cayes Jacmel, Marigot, Côte de Fer, up country between Petit Goave and Côte de Fer and the road between Côte de Fer and Aquin. The findings are summarized as follows:

#### **Water:**

Water is the sector that has been the most affected by the hurricanes. A large number of water systems were affected throughout the department. Landslides and high level of water in rivers carrying debris of all kinds were responsible for hundreds of meters of broken pipes across the department. Catchment dams have also been affected and are either broken or filled with rocks, mud and a variety of debris. The Spanish and Haitian Red Cross are currently providing a temporary assistance for drinking water to Cayes Jacmel and Côte de Fer.

#### **Shelter:**

In general, the housing sector has been little affected. Throughout the entire field survey, only 3 destroyed houses and one destroyed rural school were seen. A few houses were still located in flooded areas and significant quantities of mud could still be found in the streets of Marigot and Côte de Fer.

#### **Agriculture:**

In general the area covered between Petit Goave and the top of the mountains was little affected. Several plots of land with millet productions older than 2 months were seen. The level of damages was more important on the southern side of the mountains from the highest summit all the way down to the City of Côte de Fer. In these areas most fields were in early growth phase with millet productions ranging from one to three weeks old. These fields have most likely been replanted after the destruction left by the passage of the hurricanes. Small livestock productions were observed all over the countryside with goats, chickens, pigs and cattle evidencing that there was no total destruction of the livestock sector. High quality land was heavily damaged and in some cases completely lost all along the riversides visited.

**In summary, heavy damage was limited to very specific areas and most of the agricultural sector was already in early recovery stage. Because of the cropping cycle and raining patterns, most agricultural recovery in non-irrigated areas must happen right now. It is critical to drastically speed up the delivery of early recovery assistance to the agricultural sector otherwise the support will come too late.**

**Isolated areas:**

According to the Haitian Red Cross (HRC), a few communities located in remote areas where the roads are still blocked by landslides have not yet been visited by damage assessment teams. The HRC mentioned the following areas: Belle Anse commune, Baie d'Orange and Maribol localities; Côte de Fer commune, sixth communal section Jamais vue and third communal section Bras Gauche; Jacmel commune, La Montagne thirteenth communal section.

In view of the above, the mission recommends that multisectoral evaluation teams should be organized as quickly as possible under the coordination of the Departmental DPC and with the support of the CDGRD to reach the communities not yet visited.

It is also to be noted that the road to Belle Anse remains blocked.

**Temporary shelters:**

According to local sources, all the shelters have already been closed throughout the South-East department. The DPC provided to the families some basic kits and a small monetary assistance in order to enable them to find an alternative. It is assumed that those who lost everything are now either renting a small place or sheltered by relatives, friends and/or neighbors.

**Education Cluster meeting:**

The following points were raised during the Education cluster meeting held last week under the chairmanship of UNICEF:

**PDNA and Early Recovery**

Evaluations carried out by the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training have been used as the basis for developing and validating the education sector's recovery strategy over an 18-month period.

**Operationalisation of interventions**

There is an urgent need to consolidate NGO interventions into the table prepared by UNICEF, to provide to the Ministry of National Education and professional Training. The Ministry is to prepare a list of priority schools for rehabilitation.

The level of information provided by donors and NGOs is different (macro versus micro). An information system needs to be developed to better reflect the action of each type of actor. It is important to provide ongoing reports about actions being undertaken.

**School-cleaning in Gonaïves**

There needs to be a common agreement regarding the definition of the terms "Cleaning", "Rehabilitation" and "Sanitation". UNICEF will propose a definition which can be validated by the cluster members.

It is important that partners coordinate their actions with the Departmental Director of Education in order to avoid duplication of activities in schools.

**Inputs for the situation report can be sent to:**

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Reports and maps about the situation in Haiti can be found on <http://ochaonline.un.org/haiti>  
[http://www.mapaction.org/component/option,com\\_docman/task,cat\\_view/gid,164/Itemid,53/](http://www.mapaction.org/component/option,com_docman/task,cat_view/gid,164/Itemid,53/)

Regular updates on Road transport, Road Conditions as well as Road Condition Matrix can be found at <http://www.logcluster.org/ht08a/road-transport/roads-condition-map>