

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The National Food Security Coordination Committee (CNSA) alerts on the situation of nearly 4 million people affected by food insecurity;
- In 2016, the humanitarian response to the cholera outbreak remains a priority for the United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners;
- The UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs has allocated to Haiti nearly US \$ 2 million from the CERF to meet the humanitarian and protection needs of people crossing the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic;
- The heavy rain that fell on the town of Port de Paix (North-West) caused the death of 8 people, damaged hundreds of homes and affected more than a thousand families.



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## Haiti is facing unprecedented food insecurity

**The producers have lost more than half of their spring crops, which represents 60% of annual production in the country**

Since the beginning of 2015, Haiti has been facing a persistent drought in various agro-ecological zones. This drought has resulted in the loss of more than 50% of the 2015 spring campaign in comparison to a normal year. The spring campaign represents nearly 60% of the annual production of the country. Due to drought and climate change, the 2015 agricultural production was the worst registered in the last 35 years, according to CNSA (National Food Security Coordination entity). The considerable crop losses and reduced availability of local food in the markets elevated the prices of local products. Furthermore, significant water shortages were reported in the most affected departments (West, Central, South and Southeast).

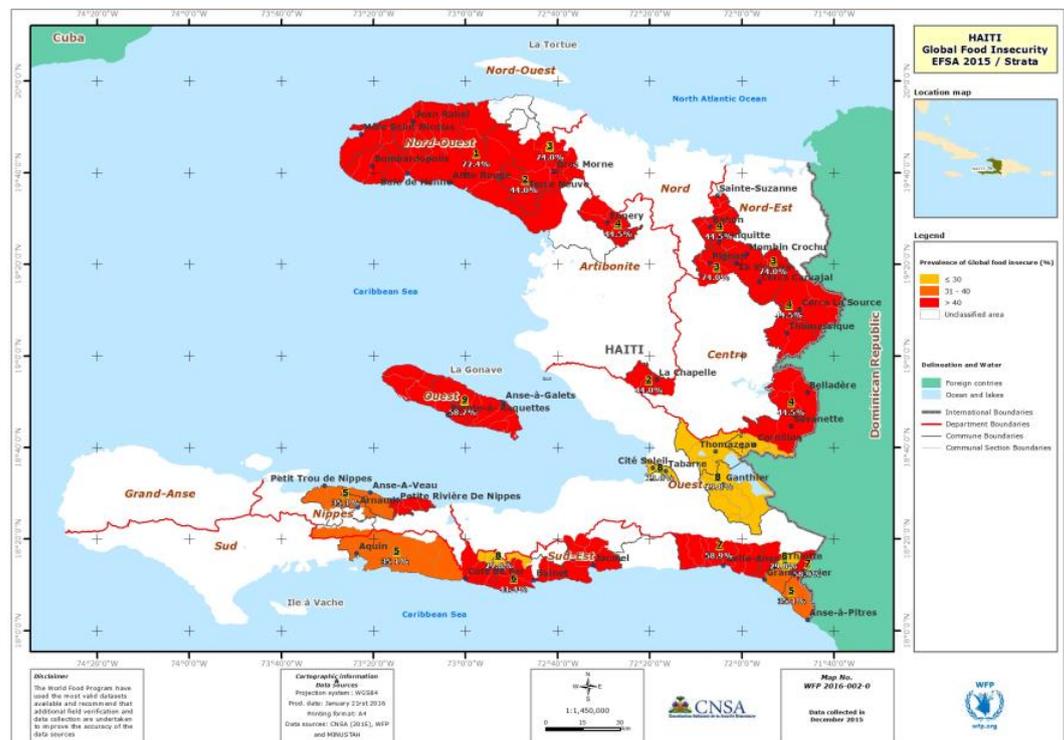
Furthermore, the price of red and black beans presented the most significant increase over the last five years. Thus, the poorest populations are experiencing the most degrading food insecurity of the past three decades. It is important to note that this deterioration is not only due to the underlying causes related to climatic variables, but also to structural factors.

### KEY FIGURES

Number of IDPs in camps 59,000  
Source: DTM, January 2016

Cumulative cholera cases (1st Jan. to 31 December 2015) 36,045  
Source: MSPP

Fatality cases (1st Jan. to 31 December 2015) 322  
Source: MSPP



Legend: Prevalence of global food insecurity. Yellow: <30%; Orange 30 – 40%; Red > 40%

*Crops losses, rising prices, the decline in demand for farm labor and increased pressure on natural resources are reducing food access for the poorest households. The most vulnerable are adopting increasingly damaging survival strategies and will continue to deteriorate their living standards, if nothing is done.*

## The situation is likely to worsen in 2016

"El Niño", which could persist in 2016, has had a strong impact on the food security in Haiti. According to CNSA, 3.6 million Haitians are currently food insecure, including 1.5 million in severe food security and 200,000 in extreme food emergency situations. With the persistence of El Niño, the CNSA estimates that, by July 2016, food insecurity could affect about 5 million people (half of the Haitian population) if no assistance is provided.

In response to the last CNSA alert, in October 2015, UNICEF and the Ministry of Public Health and Population have conducted a thorough assessment of the nutritional situation of children between 6 months and 5 years old in the 20 municipalities that are the most severely hit by the drought. The results of this survey showed that 4 municipalities are in an emergency situation (Phase 4), with global acute malnutrition rates between 16% and 27.7%. Other 2 municipalities are in crisis situation (Phase 3), with global acute malnutrition rates between 11% and 13%.

In response to this alarming situation, the CNSA has drawn up an emergency response plan aiming to fight hunger and to save the spring crop of 2016. For a total amount of 2 billion Gourdes (equivalent to US\$ 35 million), the plan aims to meet urgent needs of 200 000 vulnerable people in situation of acute food insecurity. The plan will also ensure the required nutritional assistance to the targeted groups in the affected areas.

This strategy also includes the general food distribution or cash transfer to the most vulnerable households, nutritional support for children in chronic and severe malnutrition and high labor intensive works in the most affected municipalities.

## International community support

Humanitarian actors continue to support national efforts to assist families affected by the food insecurity. For example, WFP provides food aid to 485,000 people across the country including direct cash transfers to 15,000 people. FAO helps 9,000 households in parts of Northwest and Southeast during the sowing period, with packages that include seeds for corn, sorghum, sweet potato and cassava.



An ACF staff is ready to start with the distribution of tools to the beneficiaries of the Cash for Work program in Port-de-Paix. Photo credit: OCHA Haiti.

NGOs, such as Action Contre la Faim (ACF), CARE and World Vision, continue to undertake programs aiming to reduce food insecurity particularly in the most affected departments. For example, in three municipalities of the Northwest department (Blue Basin, Chansolme and Port de Paix), ACF is implementing an emergency response program for the drought and food resilience to over 8,000 vulnerable families. This program aims to improve the lives of vulnerable people by

developing income generating activities "Cash for Work" that improve agricultural infrastructure.

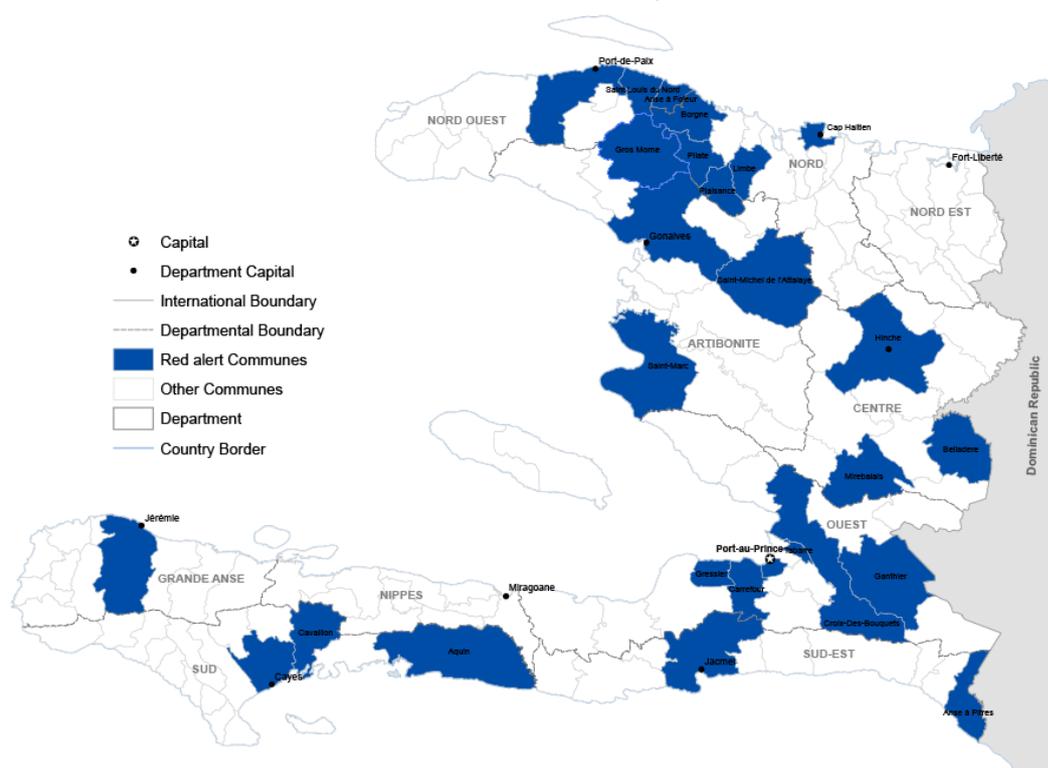
Moreover, Kore Lavi program (2003-2017) is still being implemented in 25 municipalities in five departments. This program, designed to improve access to local products for the most vulnerable populations, plans to support 250,000 families by providing food vouchers. USAID has funded this project with nearly 80 million dollars since it has started. The program is run by the World Food Program (WFP), Action Contre la Faim (ACF) and Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE).

In terms of financing, in August 2015, The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) managed by OCHA has provided US\$ 3 million for 3 projects coordinated by UNICEF, WFP and FAO. ECHO has recently allocated € 5.4 million for emergency response projects for drought and food insecurity. The humanitarian community continues to warn about the critical situation in order to mobilize more resources to strengthen the response capacity.

## Cholera remains an emergency and a priority for the UN and its partners

**25,000 people may contract the disease in 2016, while more than a million others can be affected indirectly**

Cholera remains an emergency for Haiti with more than 36 000 suspected cases and 322 deaths in 2015. Health and WASH actors continue to register cholera cases particularly, in Artibonite, West, Center and North departments. The Haitian Ministry of Public Health and Population indicated, in its latest official report published in December, that 27 communes are on red alert. However, outbreaks can be located anywhere as it was the case during the beginning of the year in communes of the Northwest department due to the floods that occurred in December 2015 and January 2016.



Meanwhile, current estimates indicate that 25,000 people may contract the disease in 2016, while 1.35 million people could be indirectly affected, and would need support. This projection may vary greatly depending on external factors, such as the political crisis, which may hinder access and the ability to respond quickly to epidemics, natural disasters, including the "El Niño", and availability of humanitarian funding in 2016.

### Access to safe water, sanitation and health care: A key challenge

The persistence of the cholera epidemic, almost 6 years after its appearance, is largely due to the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Health authorities constantly face this challenge that consists of maintaining water and sanitation facilities in treatment centers up to international standards, protecting and repairing water supply systems at high risk in urban areas and illegal tapping.

*The United Nations continues to support the efforts of the Haitian government and the civil society to strengthen health services, drinking water, hygiene and sanitation facilities.*



A boy is in the process of completing his gallon of water in a kiosk set up by DINEPA. Photo credit: Unicef Haiti.

The implementation of the National Plan for the elimination of the epidemic led to the integration of cholera into national health structures. However, operational difficulties (e.g. overdue wages, lack of supplies and equipment, lack of human resources, poor hygiene) must be addressed in order to ensure a more adequate response.

### **More than 300,000 people to be vaccinated in 2016**

PAHO-WHO and UNICEF are supporting the Government of

Haiti to achieve the target of 600,000 people planned to be vaccinated against cholera by the end of the period 2015-2016. To date, vaccination campaigns against cholera have reached 285,534 people, while more than 300,000 will be vaccinated in 2016.

This campaign comes within the framework of the National Plan for the Eradication of Cholera developed by the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP), which aims to vaccinate the population at highest risk of contamination by cholera that live in vulnerable areas (30 to 40 percent of the population living in the most vulnerable areas, or about 600,000 people).

### **The humanitarian community remains concerned by the steady decline of funding aimed to respond to the epidemic**

Along with the vaccination campaign, long-term efforts will be maintained to contain the epidemic. This include particularly UNICEF's national sanitation campaign that aims to reduce open defecation to zero, and ensure increased access to water and sanitation facilities in schools, and health centers for the benefit of 3.5 million people in rural areas.

However, the humanitarian community alerts on the constant decline in funding of the response to the epidemic. In fact, the cholera emergency response chapter of the Transition Appeal (2015/16) has received only 15.3 million or 42 percent of the US\$ 36.5 million requested. As of January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, the National Plan for the Eradication of Cholera (2013-22), that has requested US\$ 2.2 billion, was financed only up to 18 percent.

To fill these financing gaps, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has allocated to Haiti US\$ 4.1 million in August 2015, which have helped to strengthen the response capacities of actors during the previous rainy season.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) continues to support coordination, advocacy and resources mobilization efforts to minimize the risk of cholera, particularly in periods of rains.

## **The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), managed by OCHA, has allocated about US\$ 2 millions of dollars as a rapid response to the binational crisis**

### **The fund will help to meet the critical humanitarian needs of deported and repatriated persons from the Dominican Republic**

Concerned by the increasing migration flows at the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, the Humanitarian Country Team in Haiti, through the Humanitarian Coordinator, has advocated for funding from the CERF to respond to the humanitarian and protection needs of the people being deported or repatriated from the Dominican

*It is essential to ensure protection and access to basic social services for the thousands of people deported or repatriated from the Dominican Republic*

Republic. On 29 December 2015, Stephen O'Brien, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, has allocated a total amount of US\$1,986,864 from CERF-Rapid Response window to respond to the most urgent humanitarian and protection needs of the population crossing the border.



More than 2 000 deported and repatriated persons from the Dominican Republic are spontaneously settled in temporary sites in Anse a Pitres since June 2015. Photo credit: OCHA Haiti.

The funds allocated from the CERF will be used to cover increased protection and humanitarian needs created by the arrival of tens of thousands of migrants, returnees and deported people from the Dominican Republic in Haitian municipalities located alongside the border. The response will help to avoid the escalation of a humanitarian crisis within a context of potential violence, drought, human trafficking, gender-based violence and cholera. The humanitarian response and

protection of civilians is currently weakened by the lack of national capacities and the required resources by NGOs and UN Agencies.

As another objective is to improve the access to basic services and protection to individuals born in DR at risk of statelessness and that may become victims of human traffic on Haitian territory. Three organizations are the main recipients of the allocated fund: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Currently, 60 humanitarian organizations are implementing projects and programs in 19 Haitians communes located alongside the border with Dominican Republic, including 34 International NGO, 10 national NGOs, 6 UN Agencies, 5 Government institutions, 4 Red Cross movements and 1 international organization. In addition, 29 partners are implementing programs and projects in the domain of food security and nutrition, 20 in disaster management, 16 in health, 14 in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), 14 in protection and 2 in shelter.

It is estimated that some 460,000 Haitian migrants without a regular migratory status currently reside in the Dominican Republic. In addition, a decision of the Constitutional Court in 2013 deprived hundreds of thousands of people of Haitian descent of their Dominican nationality, rendering them "stateless".

## Floods worsen the vulnerability in Port-de-Paix

### **Eight deaths, hundreds of homes flooded and more than a thousand people affected**

Several localities of Port-de-Paix, North West department, were hit by multiple floods which followed heavy rains in late 2015 and beginning of 2016. Indeed, the heavy rains that hit this town have affected more than one thousand people, damaged hundreds of homes and killed 8 individuals.

While the Northwest department, particularly the town of Port-de-Paix, is struggling to recover from the effects of the drought that led to significant losses in the last two harvests, the consequences of recent floods have further aggravated the vulnerability of the population of this town. Following the floods, many families had to abandon their damaged homes to seek refuge with relatives or friends who are also living in vulnerable conditions.

*The Northwest department is one of the areas under the highest risk of hydro meteorological hazards. Emergency response capacities need to be strengthened in this department, as well as all over the country.*



A house completely damaged by the floods in the town of Port-de-Paix in the night of 21 to 22 December 2015. Photo credit: OCHA Haiti.

*"I have been living in the neighborhood of Nan Palan for over 25 years and this is the first time I experienced such flooding," said Rose Mary, a mother of 5 children who lost everything on December 21<sup>st</sup> and who has been living with a friend for over a month. "My house is uninhabitable since that tragic night. I live here with this friend who accepts to give me shelter to, as well as to my husband and my children," says this courageous woman whose small shop is buried under mud in her former house.*

*"What is more worrying is that these people already lived a situation of famine linked to the loss of the last harvest and now they have to face this catastrophic situation. There are children and women here who have not eaten for two days. We need a bit of solidarity from the actors operating in the affected area to feed and clothe these families", warns Wisly Paul, leader of the neighborhood committee.*

On site, humanitarian actors are trying to provide the required assistance. Teams from Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Médecins du Monde Canada, the DINEPA and DPC (Civil Protection Directorate) undertook the first evaluations and confirmed the urgent need for hygiene kits (buckets, soaps), cookware kits, water treatment products (Aquatab, SRO) physical cleaning and NFI (mosquito nets, sheets).

They thus proceeded with the distribution of water treatment products and hygiene kits, but only to 500 people in the most affected districts (Dieurilon, Nan Palan, Morne Dorima). Furthermore, only 300 food coupons were distributed to the affected families. Outreach activities on good hygiene and prevention practices were also conducted.

Indeed, these distributions are insufficient to fully address the needs of these vulnerable people. Moreover, there is also the risk of a cholera outbreak due to worsened sanitary conditions and recent rains. Actually, some cases of cholera have already been reported in some flooded neighborhoods.

Having conducted an assessment mission in Port-de-Paix in January, OCHA recommends that urgent action is undertaken, including the cleaning of canals, drainage of rivers, public awareness campaigns on good hygiene practices and the reinforcement of emergency stocks.

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