

This report was issued by OCHA Haiti. The next report will be issued on or around 4 November.

HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- Emergency supplies and equipment are urgently needed in preparation for Tropical Storm Tomas.
- WASH, shelter, logistics and communication clusters have identified requirements in terms of equipment and supplies that are immediately needed to augment response capacity.
- Advocacy efforts will continue tomorrow to increase awareness amongst international partners and the media on the necessity to address these needs.
- Today Groupe d'appui de la Communauté Internationale (GACI) was convened by the Prime Minister at the UN logbase to discuss coordination for preparedness for the storm. The meeting was attended by DPC, bilateral donors, UN agencies, international NGOs and MINUSTAH.
- Hurricane preparedness activities are prioritized in anticipation of heavy rainfall and flooding to occur within the next 48 hours.
- As of 3 November, the Ministry of health (MSPP) reports 442 deaths and 6,742 hospitalized cases from cholera.

II. Situation Overview

As of 3 November, the Ministry of health (MSPP) reports 442 deaths and 6,742 hospitalized cases from cholera. Five departments have been directly affected by the cholera: Artibonite, Centre, Nord, Northwest and West. Departments which have not been directly affected are: Grand-Anse, Nippes, Nord-Est, Sud, Sud-Est.

Based on the latest trajectory of Tropical Storm Tomas, the DPC has encouraged populations living in camps and low-lying coastal areas to seek alternative shelter, if possible, with family or friends.

The humanitarian community is continuing preparations for the storm. Spontaneous evacuations of the most vulnerable camp residents in Port-au-Prince are currently ongoing to safe locations. Water is being delivered to populations most at-risk of a storm in Port-au-Prince and tarps and tents are in stock to cover the needs of 300,000 individuals. Food stocks are already in place and coordination of logistical assets and personnel is ongoing. Community mobilizers have sensitized 12,589 households today and 120,000 text messages were sent to camp residents.

For the cholera response, food distributions reached 1,785 beneficiaries in the Artibonite Department and sensitization campaigns continued for populations in the most affected areas. Training of medical staff and community agents is ongoing, especially in places which have not yet been affected by cholera.

III. Humanitarian Needs and Response for Tropical Storm Tomas

Camp Coordination/Camp Management (CCCM) Operations

The CCCM Cluster has prioritized preparedness activities in anticipation of heavy rainfall and flooding to occur within the next 48 hours, while communications and health teams continued awareness-raising campaigns to mitigate the spread and effects of the cholera outbreak.

In the West department, camp management organisations report that they will be able to provide direct assistance to 120 camps and in camps that do not have any camp management agency assigned. A CCCM site planning team was dispatched to gauge the viability of one large-scale evacuation site in Croix de Bouquets for the potential relocation of the 6,000 most vulnerable individuals in Corail. According to IOM camp management unit, work is ongoing to relocate 1,800 individuals tomorrow from sectors 3 and 4 in Corail to the abandoned Hospital Vennette and Saint Michel Church in the same commune. The relocation was coordinated in conjunction with the Government of Haiti. NFIs have been pre-positioned, water and sanitation

facilities prepared, and beneficiaries identified. IOM has also been working with Handicap International to identify and assist spinal cord injury patients in camps and high-risk neighborhoods who would like an early evacuation from camps to safer shelter in light of expected weather deterioration.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

This morning, DINEPA met with WASH partners to coordinate preparations for Tropical Storm Tomas. The strategy discussed at the meeting was twofold: 1) reinforce contingency stocks in the South department and 2) strengthen WASH facilities in emergency shelters.

With regard to contingency stocks, DINEPA and WASH partners have already transported essential materials to the departments that will be most affected by the storm. This effort continues today and tomorrow. As for emergency shelters, the DPC has identified safe structures for 16,000 people (priority will be given to the elderly and the disabled). At-risk populations have been encouraged to relocate to safer areas with friends or family.

Bad sanitary conditions in many parts of the country, combined with a huge amount of rain or flooding generated by the storm, in some cases combined with mud waters, are very likely to accelerate the cholera infection rate. As a preventive measure, the amount of clean water distributed to camps and neighbourhoods in Port-au-Prince has therefore been increased. A total of 700,000 litres of water a day is currently being delivered to the population most at-risk in Port-au-Prince to allow for an extra reserve of clean water for several days, assuming delivery of water may be hindered during the storm.

In the West department, MSPP has asked WASH agencies to pay special attention to two vulnerable communities in Port-au-Prince during and after Tomas, namely Cite Soleil and Cite Eternel. These communities are vulnerable to weather-related events. The MSPP has asked the WASH Cluster representatives to send a team to these two places in order to evaluate the situation and to develop a strategy.

Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFI)

Based on a planning figure of 100,000 families potentially affected by Tomas, the Shelter Cluster estimates that 60 per cent of the shelter needs will be covered with the following available in-country stocks, answering the needs of a total of 59,826 families, or nearly 300,000 individuals: 113,743 tarps and 2,954 tents. More than 20,000 tarps are currently in customs.

In the Southeast department, IOM pre-positioned today a total of 6,500 NFI in preparation for a possible hurricane and heavy floods to occur within the next 48 hours. In les Cayes, NFI included 1,500 plastic sheets, 30 rolls of rope, 80 pairs of rubber boots and 3,000 kitchen kits, while Jacmel received 1,800 plastic sheets, 10 rolls of rope and 80 pairs of rubber boots.

Gaps and constraints

With additional tarps and tents arriving this week, the Shelter Cluster anticipates that there will be a significant shortfall of timber and additional tools to reinforce the emergency shelter kits distributed. 20,000 emergency shelter kits are urgently needed. Shelter material of a number of agencies is still at customs. Facilitating the speedy clearance of humanitarian goods will increase the capacity of agencies to respond to the emergency. However, the biggest challenge shelter agencies will face is access to sufficient and rapid logistics support, particularly as most of the areas that will be potentially affected are difficult to reach by land.

Food

Communication networks, such as Internet connection and phone networks are expected to be down during and following the storm. WFP has circulated satellite phone numbers of key WFP staff to partners for communication after the storm to start up food distributions. Once the storm has passed, WFP will be in close consultation with the DPC to commence food distributions. Discussions took place today in Port-au-Prince with food partners on preparations. It was decided that camp residents, who evacuate to designated locations, will receive food assistance on the sites for a few days until they return to the camps.

Today, WFP transported and installed water towers in sites that have been identified as possible evacuation locations in Jacmel. Vulnerable people, particularly camp residents, have the opportunity to move to these sites before the storm. WFP has also provided training to site management committees in Jacmel, in the southeast department, which will be headed by the Red Cross. WFP food aid monitors have been made available to provide assistance to the DPC and the Red Cross, if required. WFP has trucks on stand-by with supplies of meals-ready-to-eat (MREs), high energy biscuits and supplementary plumpy. Committees have begun prepositioning these items on the sites. Partners and authorities are working to ensure there is enough food and water on the sites. In Les Cayes, a WFP programme staff has been sent to Miragoane to assess warehouses.

Communication

A total of 46 community mobilizers have been deployed through the joint Disaster Risk Reduction Project (DDR) in an additional 22 camps that were specifically selected for their location close to the sea and the Riviere Grise in Martissant, La Saline, Cite Soleil, Croix des Bouquets, and Tabarre. This represents over 12,589 households sensitized today alone. This emergency sensitization initiative will continue until the conditions no longer permit the teams to work. The hour-long special radio broadcast on the imminent threat of Tropical Storm Tomas, reminding listeners of the government's recommendation of voluntary evacuation of zones at risk, including low-lying areas, is ongoing. In collaboration with OCHA's IM unit, and the Crisis Mappers group, IOM assisted in the mapping of potential hurricane shelters located throughout Port-au-Prince.

The CCCM Cluster and other organisations such as Action Contre la Faim, IFRC, IOM and Caritas continued their SMS campaign to the camps as well as messages through radio and other communication channels. IOM sent out 120,000 SMS messages today to camp residents informing them to continue to listen to the radio and local authorities for changes in the situation. A total of 600,000 SMS messages have been disseminated on Tropical Storm Tomas risk reduction by IOM on behalf of the DPC. In the West Department, hurricane preparedness and cholera messaging have also been disseminated to six new camps in Port-au-Prince, covering approximately 12,000 IDPs.

Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC), the Communications Sub Group in Haiti, and Internews, are deploying in Les Cayes and Gonaives to set up Communication Centers for press conferences, liaison activities between humanitarian agencies and local and international media, distribution of communication materials and other communication activities aimed at improving communication with affected communities. These Communication Centers will be located within (or very close to) the Humanitarian Hubs that OCHA is setting up in those areas to ensure smooth liaison between humanitarians and the local media and international journalists. CDAC is also deploying a Liaison Officer in Leogane. The Communications Sub Group is also arranging the distribution of 500 megaphones to the DPC donated by JP/HRO.

Internews' ENDK continues producing daily 15-20min humanitarian radio programs broadcast in more than 30 radio stations focusing on Tropical Storm Tomas. The radio programs provide practical information and advice on hurricane preparedness and messages from the DPC and the Meteorological Department. The radio show is also providing information on cholera prevention and services available.

Health

WHO/PAHO have prepared contingency plans for Tomas and are publishing a database containing details on locations and capacity. MSPP has asked health cluster partners to review the communication system in the event power is lost during Tomas.

Logistics

According to US Southern Command, aerial assessments and first response live saving aid will be launched from amphibious ship USS IWO JIMA, scheduled to arrive in Haiti later this week. The ship also has the ability to support helicopters and landing craft operations to quickly move personnel and cargo.

UNHAS services were used today to transport WFP communication equipment to Hinche to augment communication and connectivity capacity.

The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

The Logistics Cluster assisted ACTED in transporting 1.8 mt of emergency shelter kits to Leogane. The Logistics Cluster has increased its staff capacity, deploying additional personnel to Jeremie, Les Cayes and Miraogane.

Coordination

The American military will be pre-positioned for assistance where there are capability gaps and will plug into the UN and OCHA humanitarian coordination mechanisms already in place. OCHA has reported that they will be docked in Les Cayes and Jérémie and have liaison support in Les Cayes, Jacmel and Léogane. The JOTC will be in the lead for tasking for the Americans and others in the military realm for their response.

MINUSTAH has committed the peacekeeping troops and assets to respond to the storm. The Force Commander is reportedly ready to respond on a wide scale in Port-au-Prince and is deploying assets to both the North and South as needed.

OCHA is strengthening coordination by deploying staff in the southern peninsula of Haiti and working in collaboration with the DPC coordination cell in Port-au-Prince. Tomorrow, OCHA will activate the Crisis Coordination Cell in the event of a tropical storm or hurricane, working in collaboration with the DPC both in the capital and in the affected departments.

Today, the Logistics Cluster along with OCHA, IOM and WFP, attended a meeting in Camp Delta with the US Southcom Liaison Officers to coordinate response efforts.

IV. Humanitarian Needs and Response for Cholera

Health

OMS/PAHO reports providing ongoing support to the Ministry of Health (MSPP) in treating patients, preventing the spread of the epidemics, strengthening health institutions in the event of Tropical Storm Tomas and pre-positioning medical supplies in the regions. To date, the consumption of fish and seashells has been identified as the main concern for the populations.

There was a large increase in deaths and hospitalizations today. This fact resulted from several variables: first, no new numbers were reported over the preceding four days due to a national holiday and second, these numbers reflect the natural development of a cholera epidemic.

WHO/PAHO reports that a special health response group for Cholera Treatment Centres (CTC) has been created and is meeting regularly. The daily MSPP press conference dedicated to the cholera outbreak will be suspended during Tomas and information will be posted instead at <http://www.mspp.gouv.ht>

Training of medical staff is taking place throughout the country on management of severe dehydration. To strengthen this initiative, MSPP is training community agents to train others on health promotion activities. Health partners and the MSPP are working to ensure distribution of oral rehydration salts (ORS) in the countryside, particularly in places that have not been affected yet. This will be accompanied by health promotion activities. The MSPP will publish an official document on distribution of ORS and its use. The CCCM Cluster will distribute soaps and aquatabs in the IDP camps that are not covered by NGOs.

In the Central department, five prisoners in Mirebalais have died and 100 have required medical attention so far. The situation has stabilized and no recent cases have been identified. Prisoners now have potable water, water bladder being provided by the ICRC. Cells have been cleaned, and infection control has been instituted.

Logistics

The Logistics Cluster and DINEPA have used UNHAS services to transport 200 kg of water purification tablets and 200 kg of jerry cans from Port-au-Prince to Les Cayes. UNHAS services were also used to deliver a cargo of 1.8 metric tonnes of ringer lactate, cholera drugs, gloves, oral rehydration salts for WHO from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haitien. The Logistics Cluster facilitated the reception of incoming air cargo for UNICEF/WFP arriving from UNHRD Panama.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

In the most affected areas, an average of 6,000 families a day is receiving soap, water purification sachets and rehydration salts as well as sensitization on hand washing. Training of volunteers took place in L'Estere on Tuesday and will be carried out in Gonaives on Thursday, reaching an estimated 200 people.

Gaps

Based on an evaluation of pre-positioned stocks for Tropical Storm Tomas from 10 international actors, the WASH cluster has identified the following emergency needs: 84 bladders of 5,000 litres each with tapstands, 34 water tankers of 10,000 litres each, 37 compact water treatment units, 34 OXFAM tank water reservoirs, about 5,000 UNICEF family water kits for 10 families each, at least 200,000 buckets, 250,000 jerry cans, 18 million water purification tablets, 5 million PUR sachets, close to 99,000 soaps, and about 80,000 family hygiene kits.

Food

Distribution of food, water purification tablets and public health material is continuing. So far, WFP has distributed 40,292 MREs, 0.85 metric tonnes of high energy biscuits and 3.46 metric tonnes of dry rations since the beginning of the outbreak in Gonaives, Hinche, Mirebalais, Las Cahobas, St Marc, Grande Saline, Gros Morne and Petit Rivière. Today, WFP distributed 7,864 MREs and a dry ration of 3.17 metric tonnes (rice, beans, corn-soya blend, oil, sugar and salt) to 1,785 beneficiaries in Artibonite Department.

Communication

CCCM cluster camp management organizations continue to work on cholera sensitization campaigns. As of 2 November, out of 18 Camp management agencies contacted by Camp management organizations today, 14 camps report implementation of sensitization activities such as communication campaigns through SMS alerts and delivery of prevention materials throughout the camps.

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For more information on the response in Haiti, please visit:
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