



Hurricane Fiona

Situation Report #1

September 19, 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Hurricane Fiona made landfall as a **Category 1 hurricane** on September 18th in Puerto Rico, bringing significant rainfall and wind damage to the island, with significant impact to the southern region
- The storm moved to the Dominican Republic on Monday, September 19th, with 18 eastern provinces on red alert.
- Puerto Rico experienced an island-wide blackout due to damage to its vulnerable power grid, with some power coming back slowly.
- Rainfall in some areas nearing **30 inches** caused severe flooding and landslides, destroying critical infrastructure and isolating communities.
- Across Puerto Rico, more than **2,000** are in **shelters**, which are illequipped for implementing COVID-19 safety and prevention measures such as social distancing and handwashing.
- In the Dominican Republic, 789 people are internally displaced and 11,500 are without power due to flooding and downed power lines.
- Project HOPE has **staff on the ground** and are mobilizing additional **teams** to support affected communities in both the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Puerto Rico

Hurricane Fiona made landfall as a Category 1 storm in Puerto Rico on September 18, 2022, with significant rainfall up to 30 inches in some areas of the island.¹ President Biden announced an emergency declaration for Puerto Rico on Sunday, and Puerto Rico's Governor Pedro Pierluisi has said that the southern part of the island, as well as the southwest and the mountainous region, have been most impacted by the storm. Puerto Rico experienced an island-wide blackout due to damage to the already vulnerable power grid, including in San Juan.²

Puerto Rico has still not fully recovered from Hurricane Maria, which hit the island as a Category 4 storm five years ago. More than 3,000 homes on the island are still covered with blue tarps in the years-long aftermath of Maria.³ Over 830,000 people on the island are without water supply, which was severely impacted by the flooding.⁴ As of Monday afternoon, it was still raining heavily on the island and the National Guard has activated 600 soldiers in response.

The Puerto Rican government reports that 2,146 people are displaced in 113 shelters across 74 municipalities.⁵ Although only a handful of deaths have been reported, this number is likely to rise as search and rescue teams begin to work in the wake of the storm. There have been two reported deaths in shelters due to natural causes.⁶



Hurricane Maria Response in October 2017: Project HOPE volunteers provide health care in Loiza, Puerto Rico, three weeks after the hurricane.

Photo credit: Jose Rodrigo Madera

Dominican Republic

Project HOPE has a team on the ground in the Dominican Republic, where it has implemented global health programs for over 30 years. Fiona hit the

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/09/19/us/hurricane-fiona-puerto-rico/953d2e0c-8158-509fbffa-0dbc0d087cc1?smid=url-share>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/09/19/us/hurricane-fiona-puerto-rico/75fe1474-ab63-5f13ad0b-f1cf5e77329?smid=url-share>

³ <https://apnews.com/article/floods-storms-hurricanes-weather-dominican-republicb0932ff0e3c40627e81ffad4d4d5d0dd>

⁴ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/09/19/hurricane-fiona-puerto-rico-live-updates/>

⁵ <https://www.preps.pr.gov/>

⁶ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/09/19/hurricane-fiona-puerto-rico-live-updates/>

Dominican Republic on Monday, causing heavy rainfall, flooding, landslides and downed power lines. Nearly 12,000 people are without power.

The eastern side of the country is most affected by the hurricane, with 18 provinces on red alert. Over 750 people have been displaced with more than 50 homes damaged. These numbers are expected to rise as the storm heads northward, with potential to affect other Caribbean nations.

PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE has emergency response personnel in both Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic and are mobilizing additional staff and volunteers for deployment.

Project HOPE is preparing an initial shipment of Disaster Hygiene Kits for distribution to affected populations. Project HOPE is also working with existing partners to mobilize additional health and water, sanitation, and hygiene supplies.

Depending on needs, Project HOPE is planning to launch mobile medical teams, assist existing clinics, provide Mental Health and Psychosocial Services support, surge medical staffing, and distribute hygiene products and other relief items.

The team will continue to work with health authorities and local partners to determine ongoing health needs and adapt response as needed.

We will continue monitoring Hurricane Fiona's path and will be prepared to deploy additional teams to any further impacted islands.

Project HOPE has responded to multiple disasters in the Latin America and Caribbean region, including the 2021 earthquake in Haiti, Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas in 2021, Hurricanes Eta and Iota in Central America in 2020, and Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico in 2017.

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