



! HURRICANE FIONA



project
HOPE

Situation Report #6

September 29, 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 8,000 homes in the Dominican Republic have been damaged or destroyed and 500,000 residents remain without electricity.
- In Puerto Rico, over 300,000 people remain without power and 200,000+ lack access to water over a week since Hurricane Fiona made landfall.
- Vulnerable populations including the elderly, mobility impaired, and isolated communities are a priority as affected populations return or remain home in areas impacted by flooding.
- Project HOPE is actively responding in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, with a focus on WASH; cold chain and insulin access; prevention of vector-borne illnesses and COVID; mental health and psychosocial support; and ensuring equitable access to primary health care services.

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 35 inches in some areas of the island.¹

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/article/tropical-storm-fiona-hurricane.html>

In the aftermath of Fiona, eight storm-related deaths have been confirmed.² Due to flooding and landslides, about 1,000 people needed rescue support.³ Water service continues to be an issue for 212,000 residents, and approximately 350,000 people still do not have power.⁴

The government is prioritizing restoring power to hospitals and emergency medical facilities. However, 10 days out from the storm, 26 hospitals remain offline and are dependent on generators for power.⁵ Such efforts would provide welcome relief as diesel shortages have raised concerns for these facilities that are running generators to stay operational. Management of cold-chain and supplies of vaccines also continue to be an issue with the lack of electricity. Additionally, cellular towers are currently running on diesel-fueled backup generators, and telecommunications blackouts may be imminent as diesel becomes scarcer.⁶

An ongoing lack of water raises concerns for hygiene, sanitation, spread of infectious and vector-borne diseases, and access to clean drinking water.

Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic's government is reporting that over 8,000 homes have been damaged by Hurricane Fiona and is aiming to rebuild them immediately as the hurricane season may be far from over.⁷

Health authorities are prioritizing WASH and prevention of mosquito-borne illnesses including malaria, chikungunya, and Zika in communities affected by widespread flooding.

PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE has emergency response teams in both the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico and is hiring additional staff locally to support the response.

In Puerto Rico, Project HOPE has been engaging with shelters and the surrounding affected communities, providing much-needed hygiene supplies, as well as water, chlorine tabs, and water filters to the impacted populations. Project HOPE has procured over 10,000 Disaster Hygiene Kits to Puerto Rico and the Dominican



Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team in Puerto Rico deliver water and hygiene supplies to shelters in the impacted areas.

² <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/hurricane-fiona-strengthens-category-4-storm-it-heads-toward-bermuda-2022-09-21/>

³ <https://nbc-2.com/news/2022/09/19/1000-rescued-as-hurricane-fiona-cripples-puerto-rico-with-flooding-and-power-outages-before-slamming-the-dominican-republic/>

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/27/us/hurricane-fiona-puerto-rico-blackouts.html>

⁵ <https://www.preps.pr.gov/>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/DavidBegnaud/status/1573068121753407489?s=20&t=djx12KYUxTgkPXuDPB7sdA>

⁷ <https://dominican.today.com/dr/local/2022/09/22/abinader-more-than-8000-homes-will-be-rebuilt-this-weekend/>



Republic and is also working with existing partners to locally distribute additional health and water, sanitation, and hygiene supplies.

Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team has also mobilized local medical staff and mental health/psychosocial support for home visits within impacted communities to provide care and case referrals to local clinics. These home visits have a specific focus on the most vulnerable, such as the elderly and those who are bedridden.

Since power outages remain a significant concern, Project HOPE is procuring FRIO bags for distribution, which allow individuals to keep their insulin cold when electricity is not available. Post-Hurricane Maria, Project HOPE installed a cold-chain system on the island that is still functional. The Emergency Response Team will be meeting with health officials to determine how best to continue support of the cold-chain system.

In the Dominican Republic, our Emergency Response Team is focusing on water, sanitation, and hygiene needs. The team has also procured mosquito nets and insect repellent for distribution to address the threat of vector-borne diseases due to the substantial rain and flooding. HOPE will be working with local educators to ensure proper use of mosquito nets is communicated to their recipients. Project HOPE will also be supporting health facilities in affected communities to provide targeted care and health education outreach for those most in need.

The Emergency Response Team also met with the Emergency Operations Center, which provides a bridge between the government, agencies, and organizations. They have also engaged with SNS, the national health service, with 43 health care centers in Higuay that are damaged and in need of rehabilitation and furniture. The ERT is planning to procure 43 surgical packs for those centers.

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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