

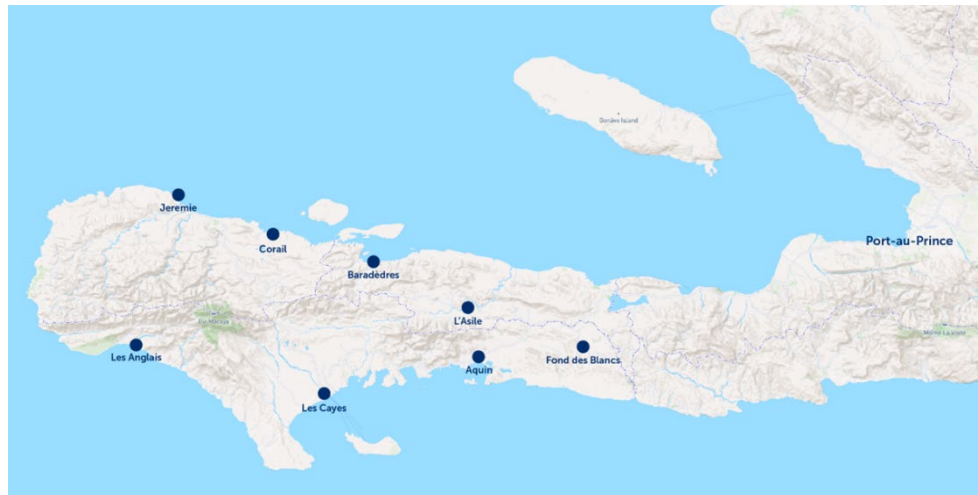
HAITI CHOLERA AND INSECURITY RESPONSE

Situation Report #6

February 16, 2023

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Haiti's education, health, and public safety systems have continued to decline as armed violence intensifies and spreads to new regions. Schools have closed due to looting, shootings, and kidnappings while hospitals are reducing to only emergency services due to the increased insecurity caused by police protests after the recent attack.ⁱ
- Project HOPE has launched a multi-sectoral cholera response with local partners, beginning with the immediate shipment and import of WHO Cholera Kits and an in-depth health and WASH assessments of eight cholera treatment centers across the departments of Sud, Nippes, and Grand'Anse.
- Project HOPE's team in Haiti is using findings from the recent needs assessment to inform a WASH implementation plan and baseline survey targeted to each health facility's individual infrastructure and knowledge gaps.
- Since the outbreak began in the fall of 2022, the Haitian Ministry of Health (MSPP) has reported over 30,000 suspected cases of cholera with 2,354 confirmed by lab test and approximately 600 associated deaths. Despite best efforts to test and track the spread of disease, underreporting remains a challenge due to persisting insecurity and logistics constraints.ⁱⁱ



Project HOPE-supported health facility sites located in Les Anglais, Jeremie, Corail, Baradère, Les Cayes, L'Asile, Aquin, and Fond des Blancs

SITUATION OVERVIEW

It has been several weeks since the attack that killed seven police officers in Haiti's Artibonite Valley and the effects are still unfolding. The region's main healthcare facility, Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Deschappelles, was forced to suspend operations and limit its services to strictly life-saving emergencies. This is the first time the hospital, which serves 700,000 people in the area, has closed its doors. The unprecedented choice was caused by the lack of police presence to protect against the threat of rising gang violence and kidnappings, which have recently spread to rural communities. Polices protests against the lack of protective equipment have continued since the attack, making it unsafe for anyone to travel to or from the facility. Though the attack took place in the Artibonite Valley, similar conditions persist in other rural departments.ⁱⁱⁱ

Child protection has become a topic of international concern, as the combination of gang violence and infection control have left 2.6 million children in need of lifesaving assistance.^{iv} Haitian children are unable to access adequate nutrition, potable water or medical treatment, while also facing the threat of sexual violence and kidnapping by armed groups. On top of this dire situation, the police attack and subsequent protests have left schools unprotected against gangs who have begun to target schools. This has included the looting of property and food supplies as well as a higher incidence of shootings and kidnappings on school property. Not only have many schools closed in recent weeks to avoid putting their students at risk, but many children are afraid to attend even when their school is in session.ⁱ

The weaponization of women’s bodies through Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) by rival gangs remains a major tool in the war for control. The experience of being kidnapped, starved, gang raped, and impregnated is not uncommon – even for children as young as 10-years-old. Armed groups continue the threat of rape to prevent women from fleeing their territories. These crimes are severely underreported due to the threat of retaliation. According to an interview by the AP, even when legal recourse is attempted, police have been known to decline cases involving gang members.^v

PROJECT HOPE RESPONSE

Project HOPE is implementing a multi-sectoral response in response to the cholera epidemic and mental health and gender-based violence crisis. The program targets communities across the governorates of Sud, Grand’Anse, and Nippes.

Health and WASH interventions are focused on key community clinics providing cholera care. Project HOPE Haiti team has determined WASH interventions for each health facility with water points and storage representing the most common support proposed. Further, a WASH baseline questionnaire will be conducted in late February to investigate knowledge levels on basic handwashing practices, diseases of concern (including cholera), and access to adequate latrines, handwashing stations, and safe drinking water. Its results will inform future messaging campaigns and targeted interventions.

Project HOPE is also building a team of Mental Health and Sexual Gender-Based Violence experts, including a cadre of social workers to support SGBV at the community level. Project HOPE will also be training health care staff on the clinical management of SGBV.

Intensifying unrest and gang activity caused by the police attacks have added an additional layer of challenge for the Project Hope team. Road closures and demonstrations also continue to pose a logistics challenge for the delivery of essential cholera treatment supplies to under-resourced health facilities. The Project HOPE team continues to work through these challenges.



CTC tent in Les Anglais.



Supplies at the CTC In Sukrery Henry.



CTC tent in Baradère.

ⁱ [UN News – Haiti: UNICEF reports nine-fold increase in violence targeting schools – 9 February 2023](#)

ⁱⁱ [PAHO - Cholera resurgence in Hispaniola: Haiti: Data as of 2023-02-16](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Miami Herald – “As Caribbean leaders meet to discuss Haiti, gang violence has new victim: a rural hospital” – 16 February 2023](#)

^{iv} [UNICEF – Haiti: 1 in 2 children depend on humanitarian aid to survive this year – 27 January 2023](#)

^v [Associated Press – “War for control of Haiti’s capital targets women’s bodies” – 13 February 2023](#)