

Response to Hurricane Irma: Cuba

Situation Report No. 3. Office of the Resident Coordinator

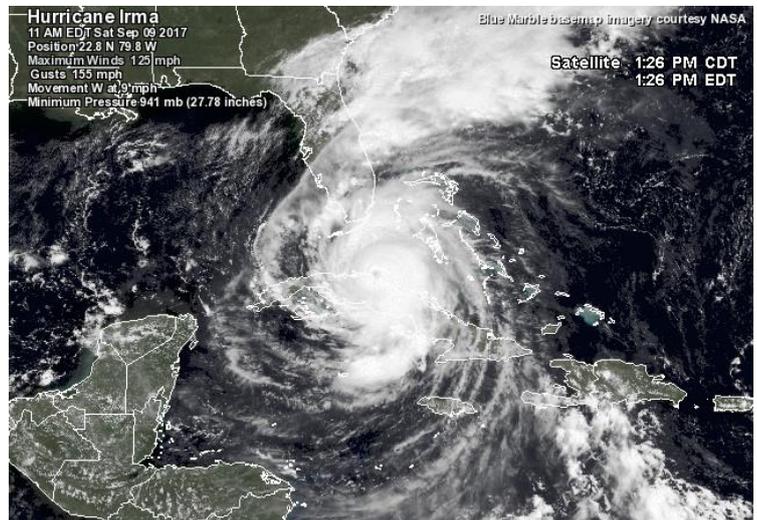
(09/09/2017)



This report is produced by the Office of the Resident Coordinator. It covers the period from 14:00 hrs. on September 08th to 12:00 hrs. on September 09th. The next report will be issued on or around 11/09.

Highlights

- Hurricane Irma has been impacting Cuba for more than 24 hours, with sustained winds of 250 kilometers per hour and even stronger gusts.
- Sea surge and coastal flooding will continue affecting the country today and tomorrow due to the slow movement of the hurricane, together with wind intensity and heavy rains.
- Although its current position is in the north of central Cuba, the diameter of its area of impact is so wide (800 kilometers) that strong winds and rains cover a large part of the national territory.
- 10.5 million people (almost 94% of the Cuban population) are under hurricane alarm phase. The three phases of the Early Alert System cover the whole national territory.
- Coastal flooding began in low-lying areas of Havana, the country's capital with more than 2.1 million people. Until tomorrow, waves up to nine meters high and sea surges in the whole coastline are expected.



10,5 million
people are under the Hurricane Alarm Phase

+ 43 hospitals and polyclinics
sheltered and offering essential health services

+15 municipalities
from Camaguey to Villa Clara with agricultural damages

*Note: All the information in this report has been taken from Cuban official media (TV, radio, and press) and statements from Cuban authorities. Sources: Newspapers Periódicos Granma, Juventud Rebelde, Vanguardia, Invasor, Adelante, Periódico 26, Ahora, Sierra Maestra y Venceremos. Radio: Radio Habana Cuba, Radio Angulo, Radio Mambí; Press agencies: Prensa Latina (PL) y Agencia Cubana de Noticias (ACN); Web sites: Cubadebate. Supplementary data has been taken from the National Statistics Office website.

Situation overview

The sustained winds of 250 kilometers per hour and even stronger gusts of Hurricane Irma, currently a Category 4 on the Saffir-Simpson scale, continue to punish Cuba, already for more than 24 hours.

The slow movement of the hurricane, at the moment 19 kilometers per hour, is adding to the devastating intensity of its winds, which will prolong the impact of the hurricane on the island today and tomorrow.

The eye of Hurricane Irma made landfall in Cuba at 21.00 on Friday by Cayo Romano, north of the municipality of Esmeralda in the Camagüey Province. However, since the early hours of Friday, it has been impacting half of the country on its journey along the northern coast.

Although its current position is in the north of the central zone of the country, just north of Ciego de Ávila and Villa Clara keys, the diameter of its area of impact is so wide (800 kilometers) that strong winds and rains cover a large part of the national territory. In the eastern part of the country, the first to receive Hurricane Irma's impact 24 hours ago, there are still tropical storm force winds and rains.

Storm surges and coastal flooding have been reported in both coasts in the eastern and central provinces of the country.

In the morning, the coastal municipalities of Villa Clara and Sancti Spíritus, the closest to the center of the hurricane, suffered 90 kilometers per hour winds and gusts up to 150 kilometers per hour, accompanied by heavy rains.

Most of the coastal municipalities in these provinces are without electricity.

In Sancti Spíritus, more than 100,000 people are reported evacuated with an additional 152,000 in Matanzas.

Flooding has also begun in the coastal areas of the western provinces of Matanzas, Mayabeque and La Habana, where over six-meter-high waves are expected today in the afternoon and evening.

The Institute of Meteorology (INSMET) estimates that, in the lower areas of the western part of the country, the storm surge may extend from 200 to 500 meters inland.

Damage to electrical and transportation networks, commercial and residential roofs, and medical and tourism infrastructure as well as in agricultural areas has been reported.

More than one million people were evacuated in the first seven provinces under the Hurricane Alarm Phase. Seventy-seven percent of those evacuated sought protection with relatives and neighbors.

According to preliminary estimates, as of Friday evening, the municipalities of Gibara, Banes, Rafael Freyre, Holguín and Antilla in Holguin Province were the hardest hit by Hurricane Irma.

Provinces that have suffered less damage are ready to offer their support to the most-impacted territories.

Humanitarian Response

National authorities

Of the 15 provinces in Cuba, 14 are under the Hurricane Alarm Phase, following an announcement this morning by the Cuban Civil Defense. A total of **10.5 million people, 93.7%** of the Cuban population, live in these territories.

Every part of the national territory has been declared under one of the Early Alert System phases:

- **Alarm Phase:** Guantánamo, Santiago de Cuba, Granma, Holguín, Las Tunas, Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Villa Clara, Santi Spíritus, Cienfuegos y Matanzas, Mayabeque, La Habana and Artemisa.
- **Alert Phase:** Pinar del Río.
- **Informative Phase:** Isla de la Juventud.

With thousands of people evacuated in dozens of cities, the country remains attentive to the guidance of the Cuban Civil Defense. The institution has reiterated its calls for local and provincial governments and the population to move

any persons in danger to safe spaces. The numbers of those currently under protection have been increasing as the hurricane moves westward, generating significant risk to the western part of the country. According to preliminary data, evacuated people in the following territories were: Baracoa 33,000, Granma 43,610, Las Tunas 136,700, in Matanzas 26,000, Cárdenas 3,000, Caibarien 92,000 and Holguín 43,610.

As meteorological conditions deteriorate in the west of the country, highways and roads along the northern coast have been closed.

The Cuban Civil Defense has reiterated its calls to state institutions in the provinces that are under the Hurricane Alarm Phase (Mayabeque, La Habana and Artemisa), which must comply with their respective action plans, to limit the movement of people and means of transportation as well as other potentially life-threatening actions.

The population is directed to remain informed on the evolution of this dangerous hurricane through tropical hurricane warnings issued by the Institute of Meteorology (INSMET), and based on the guidelines of the Cuban Civil Defense, and to comply with all measures prescribed by local authorities.

Sectors



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Damage:

- Information related to damages remains limited in this sector.

Response:

- There is increased hydro-meteorological monitoring at the national level, including in the western part of the country.
- In all evacuation centers, safe drinking water will be provided.
- Water supply is ensured through generators to avoid any kind of disruption.
- In all provinces, intense efforts to clean sewers, prune trees, implement hygiene measures and collect garbage are underway. In Sancti Spiritus and Villa Clara, sewers and rooftops are being cleaned; solid wastes, construction materials, traffic signals, including traffic lights and some street lights, removed.
- In order to avoid possible floods, the spillway of the micro-hydroelectric dam Los Alevines in Villa Clara has been cleared.
- Efforts are geared toward ensuring the availability of sodium hypochlorite for water purification.

UNICEF

- UNICEF is coordinating the purchase of 3 million chlorine tablets to support water purification efforts.

PAHO/WHO

- PAHO/WHO is estimating needs in terms of quantities of analysis kits required to ensure water quality.



Food Safety and Nutrition

Response/Preparatory measures:

Potential damage:

- In Camagüey province, severe impacts on the agricultural sector have been recorded, especially damages of major crops and plantations, destruction of several poultry farms and other productive units. According to estimates, Minas Nuevas, Sierra de Cubitas, San Miguel, Camalote and Esmeralda are among the most affected municipalities.
- Severe damages are predicted for the provinces of Ciego de Avila, Sancti Spiritus and Villa Clara. National authorities are quantifying the extent of damages.
- General reports have been issued on crop impacts in Maisí (Guantánamo province) and other sources reveal that plantain and tubers have razed to the ground in Baracoa.

**Over 15
municipalities**
from Camaguey to
Villa Clara with
agricultural damages

- In Holguín province, the most affected areas are Antilla, Banes, Gibara and Rafael Freyre, where damages to sugar cane and plantain crops have been reported.

Measures to protect crops and agricultural inputs:

- The State Agricultural Enterprises in all provinces at risk support the sale of foods to evacuated people.
- In Havana, markets have been provided with agricultural products, prioritizing the sale of grains, meat, lactose products and canned goods. In Artemisa and Matanzas provinces, crops are being early harvested, measures are taken to protect planted crops, safeguard equipment and irrigation systems, while livestock is being relocated to higher grounds.
- The lactose industry in Matanzas collected 2,000 kilograms of cheese in the municipalities Limonar, Pedro Betancourt and Unión de Reyes. The protection of 18 warehouses that have infrastructural damage above 50% has been prioritized.

FAO:

- FAO is closely observing the developments in order to stay up-to-date with the needs of national counterparts and to be able to provide a rapid and efficient response for the rehabilitation of food production in the most affected sectors.
- Direct communications with sectoral authorities are maintained to be able to determine the necessities as soon as possible
- Regional and central offices are prepared for assistance

WFP:

- WFP has a contingency stock of 1,600 tons of food pre-positioned in Havana, Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba Provinces to support immediate assistance to around 275,000 people for one month in areas affected by Irma.
- Possible response scenarios are being assessed to define the assistance of WFP, together with the Government, in relation to food rations, prioritized population groups and times, prioritizing the most affected areas.
- WFP is in permanent contact with its headquarters and regional bureau to ensure a swift assistance according to the support needs.



Infrastructures and Basic Services Rehabilitation

Damages:

Currently, impacts have been reported in housing as well as on transportation, electricity and communications networks. The territories reporting damages are:

Guantánamo:

- In Baracoa, the partial damaging of some houses, state institutions, roads and the airport runway is reported.
- In the community of Yumurí, El Turey, Palma Clara and the Malecon of the city of Baracoa, some houses were affected.
- Minor landslides are reported along various points on the La Farola Viaduct and the 13 kilometer Jamal-La Tinta-Cantillo Road is affected.

Holguin:

- Dozens of damaged homes and damage to state centers are being reported in Gibara.
- In the municipalities of Rafael Freyre and the city of Holguín, impacts to the power line and fallen trees are being reported.
- In Banes, there are reports of damage to light roofs, trees and some fallen utility poles, as well as damage from false ceilings in the tourist area.
- In the municipality of Antilla, damage to homes and state entities, such as the Railroad Workshop and the warehouse, has been reported.

Las Tunas:

- In Puerto Padre, damage was reported to decks, especially in villas located near the beach.
- In Manatí, fallen trees were reported as the primary impact.

Camagüey:

- Nearly the entire northern part of the province is suffering from problems with the flow of electricity. The falling of trees and debris and the detachment of decks is being reported throughout the whole northern part of the territory.
- In Nuevitas, specifically in the resort of Santa Lucía, coastal inundation and strong winds have destroyed much of the hotel infrastructure and private homes.
- In the municipal seat, there are serious impacts to housing and in statewide buildings such as the Coliseo Deportivo. The 10 de Octubre Thermoelectric Plant has halted operation due to the majority of its units rupturing due to the impacts of the hurricane.
- The passage that connects Cayo Romano with the province has been interrupted at Bridge 12.
- In Esmeralda, severe damage is reported to roofs and façades of state institutions and private homes in addition to fallen trees, electrical network damage, and partial and total landslides.

The rest of the affected provinces have not reported considerable damage.

Preparatory measures:Matanzas

- In terms of communication, more than 200 public telephones and 15 public areas for Wi-Fi Internet connection have been removed for protection.
- More than 70% of amateur radio operators have already been activated, whose work is key in situations of this magnitude.

Havana

- Sanitation works are reinforced in all municipalities in order to make the city as clean as possible following Hurricane Irma.
- Thirty-four Wi-Fi zones in the area will be dismantled, 11 of which are placed along the Malecon, until the passage of Hurricane Irma.
- The state electricity company has brigades ready to face any contingency, working on the pruning of trees that constitute a risk to the communication network.

Santiago de Cuba

- The area is prepared to compensate for damage in affected provinces. From this Saturday, 90 workers of the state electricity company will work in the zone of Santa Lucia Beach in Camagüey.

Pinar del Río, Artemisa and Cienfuegos

- Three contingents of 300 linemen and support staff will rehabilitate networks in Caibarién, Sagüa la Grande and Corralillo.

UNDP

- Of the 9,823 tarpaulins pre-positioned in the provinces of Las Tunas and Holguín, 894 are being used for the protection of food and basic necessities in warehouses. In Holguin, 352 have already been distributed to protect food and basic necessities in warehouses in Granma, Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo. The rest will be distributed gradually according to situation and the guidance from the government.
- The UNDP Office in Havana is located in an evacuation area due to its proximity to the coast; floodgates have been placed in a preventive manner and the use of the office has been suspended for UNCT meetings. Meetings are being held at WFP as an alternative location.
- UNDP has activated its emergency response mechanism. Two UNDP experts will travel to the country on Monday to support the UNDP Office in their response.
- The Housing and Early Recovery Sector, led by UNDP with the support of IOM, UN Habitat and UNESCO, continues preparing information on products needed for response, including: roofing, mattresses, kitchen kits, sheets and tools. These actions will be coordinated with those of the United Nations agencies that work in the water and sanitation, food security and health sectors.



43 hospitals and polyclinics

sheltered and offering essential health services to the population

Overview of health services in provinces likely to be affected:

Most affected Provinces/Municipalities	Hospitals	Polyclinics	CFPN	Maternity Care Centers	Nursing Homes	Senior Care Centers	60 years old > M		5 years old < M	
							F	F	F	F
Camaguey (Nuevitas, Minas, Sierra de Cubitas, Esmeralda)	13 (2)	31 (6)	657 (143)	7 (0)	14 (4)	24 (4)	72,869 (13,730)	79,429 (13,834)	21,713 (4,141)	20,335 (3,881)
Ciego Avila (Bolivia, Morón, Chambas)	3 (1)	19 (6)	392 (141)	10 (1)	8 (2)	16 (3)	39,025 (11,028)	41,651 (11,881)	12,523 (3,481)	11,743 (3,170)
S.Spiritus (Yaguajay)	8 (1)	23 (4)	448 (76)	5 (1)	8 (2)	9 (nd)	47,508 (6,533)	50,211 (6,509)	12,753 (1,314)	12,026 (1,211)
V.Clara (Caibarien, Camajuani, Encrucijada, Sagua, Quemado y Corralillo)	13 (3)	37 (11)	837 (250)	8 (1)	16 (5)	26 (5)	86,521 (25,874)	95,861 (27,929)	20,090 (5,810)	18,541 (5,310)

CFPN: Cabinets of Family Physicians and Nurses

Damages:

- A Cabinet of Family Physicians and Nurses in the Yurumi community in Baracoa Municipality (Guantanamo Province) was affected.
- In Nuevitas (Camaguey Province), the Hospital Martin Chan Puga was severely hit by hurricane force winds.

Response/Preparatory measures:

- Vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, the elderly, critical patients (such as those undergoing hemodialysis or needing surgery), and children under five years of age, are being protected in areas with the highest likelihood of being impacted by Hurricane Irma.
- Almost 70 medical and surgical teams were deployed to the ground and are ready to provide primary lifesaving medical care to the most affected and difficult to reach areas.
- Blood banks in all affected areas were strengthened in all affected municipalities.
- The protection of health supplies and resources, medical equipment and laboratories of medical universities has been guaranteed. In addition, medical universities are being used as shelters for the population.
- Personnel and volunteers of the Red Cross are activating their response strategy. Over 90 offices for family contacts have been activated.
- The epidemiological situation is stable. Currently, there is no disease outbreak of water or food borne contagious disease and measures are being implemented to control contagious illnesses. Local authorities are maintaining a statistical register on sheltered population groups. Hypochlorite is available in both pharmacy networks and shelters.
- Villa Clara Province: Around 5,000 health workers, 800 hospital beds, blood reserves, oxygen, and health transports were activated.
- Havana Province: The "Policlinico Manduley" area is adopting necessary measures to protect 28 pregnant women in the municipality of Centro Habana.

PAHO/WHO:

- PAHO/WHO is estimating needs according to different scenarios to ensure the provision of essential lifesaving health services to the population.
- The PAHO/Cuba Working Group on Disasters is organizing response strategies and ensuring communications with the Regional Emergency Operations Center to coordinate a comprehensive response in all affected countries.
- Mechanisms have been established to facilitate the flow of information and coordination with national authorities, ensuring internal preparations to facilitate purchases to adequately respond to the country's needs.

UNFPA

- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is estimating, according to municipalities that may be affected by Hurricane Irma, the possible needs of "Sexual and Reproductive Health Kits" and "Personal Hygiene Kits" for pregnant women, to support national authorities in providing necessary health care to the population in these municipalities.

**Education****Damages:**

- In the province of Holguín, the greatest damages, according to the first estimates, are reported in the municipalities of Gibara, Banes, Rafael Freyre, Holguín and Antilla; in the latter case, considerable damages were reported in homes and government institutions such as in the Canalito community's school. Damaged registered in Gibara include the Ovidio Torres school.
- In the municipality of Caibarién, located in Villa Clara Province, the evacuation of 3,860 people to educational institutions as temporary shelters is currently underway.

Response/Preparatory measures:

- Under the Hurricane Alarm and Alert Phases, all educational institutions have temporarily suspended educational activities and measures were taken to secure school materials and equipment.
- Students staying at boarding schools and residences have been sent home (more than 8,000 in Holguin, 3,200 in Santi Spíritus and 4,601 in Las Tunas);
- In the provinces considered at risk, schools have been established as evacuation centers: 101 in Villa Clara Province, 96 in Ciego de Ávila Province, 100 in Holguín Province, 97 in Las Tunas and 35 in Matanzas.

UNICEF

- UNICEF is defining the required interventions to ensure a rapid return of children and adolescents to safe and protective learning spaces.

UNESCO

- UNESCO is working to identify possible damages in schools in the affected municipalities to support educational centers rehabilitation to guarantee safe learning spaces.
- UNESCO will assess the damage extent to develop pedagogical strategies in order to overcome postdisaster stress in students and teachers

**Logistics****Potential damage:**

- Coastal flooding is expected as a result of Hurricane Irma, given the strong winds. Waves of up to nine meters high are expected in some areas, such as the coastal municipalities in Camaguey Province.
- Authorities in Las Tunas Province (in the municipalities of Amancio, Jesus Menendez, Manati y Puerto Padre) estimate that Hurricane Irma may lead to flooding not only in the northern coastline, but also in the southern low-lying areas, such as Guayabal

Response/Preparatory measures:

- In the provinces threatened by Hurricane Irma, local authorities are guaranteeing the resources to protect warehouses used for the storage of food and other key commodities. In Las Tunas Province, protection measures are in place for the resources stored in almost 160 warehouses, including those of the bulk sugar terminal in Puerto Carupano in the northern part of this area. In Cienfuegos Province, about 4,000 tons of commodities have been stored in the main port's warehouses to avoid potential damage.

WFP:

- WFP has five mobile storage units (MSUs) in-country that could be re-directed to the most affected areas to protect food slated for the population, in support of local authorities.
- In the municipalities of Baracoa and Maisi (Guantanamo Province), WFP has coordinated with local authorities to dismantle some of the MSUs donated during Hurricane Matthew response efforts.
- WFP is monitoring the potential impact of Hurricane Irma (winds, heavy rains and sea surge) on the infrastructure destined to the storage, elaboration and distribution of food to vulnerable groups, taking into account lessons learned from previous experience.

General Coordination

The UN Disaster Management Team (UNDMT) is closely monitoring the situation and under its leadership, the UN Emergency Technical Team (UNETT) is working on the first draft of a response plan. The UNDMT met again today to exchange views and coordinate next steps.

The UN System is maintaining close dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment, the main counterpart of the United Nation System (UNS) in Cuba.

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For further information, please visit: www.unocha.org, www.reliefweb.int, www.redhum.org, www.onu.org.cu.

For further information, please visit:

Instituto de Meteorología de Cuba: <http://www.met.inf.cu>

Granma: <http://www.granma.cu>

Juventud Rebelde: <http://www.juventudrebelde.cu/>

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