



USAID
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**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

***Latin America and the Caribbean –
Hurricane Season 2008***

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2008

September 4, 2008

BACKGROUND AND KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Between August 15 and 16, Tropical Storm Fay entered the Dominican Republic from the east, moving across the island of Hispaniola and through Haiti, resulting in three continuous days of heavy rainfall and flooding. On August 25, Tropical Storm Gustav neared Hispaniola’s southwestern coast, and additional rainfall caused increased flooding in Haiti and neighboring parts of the Dominican Republic, leading the evacuation of affected populations.
- On August 26, Hurricane Gustav passed over Haiti, producing heavy rains and winds, particularly affecting Gonaïves in Artibonite Department, Aquin and Les Cayes in South Department, Petit Riviere de Nippes and Miragoane in Nippes Department, Port de Paix in Northwest Department, Dap Haiten in North Department, Hinche in Central Department, Grand Goâve in West Department, and Cotes de Fer, Bainet, and Jacmel (Marigot) in Southeast Department.
- On August 28, Tropical Storm Gustav made landfall in eastern Jamaica and moved along the southern parishes, predominantly affecting St. Thomas, St. Catherine, Portland, and St. Mary.
- On August 30, Hurricane Gustav made landfall on the Isla de Juventud and Pinar del Río Province in western Cuba as a Category Four hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale. The hurricane affected an estimated 400,000 people and injured 19 others, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). As of September 3, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) reported seven deaths.
- Beginning on September 1, the approach of Tropical Storm Hanna led to additional rainfall and high winds throughout Haiti and the Dominican Republic, particularly affecting areas previously impacted by Tropical Storms Fay and Gustav, including Haiti’s Gonaïves Department, where floodwaters have been reported to be up to three meters deep.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE		SOURCE
TROPICAL STORM FAY, HURRICANE GUSTAV, AND TROPICAL STORM HANNA		
Cuba	400,000 affected, 7 dead, 6,000 displaced	OCHA – September 3, 2008
Dominican Republic	8 dead, 6,000 people displaced, 1,253 houses damaged	OCHA – September 3, 2008
Haiti	153,000 affected, 104 dead, 7 missing, 35 injured, 3,307 houses destroyed, 11,827 houses damaged	OCHA – September 3, 2008
Jamaica	72 communities impacted, 12 dead, 4,000 individuals directly affected	OCHA – September 3, 2008 IFRC – September 2, 2008 U.S. Embassy in Kingston – September 3, 2008

FY 2008 HUMANITARIAN FUNDING TO DATE

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Cuba	\$100,000
USAID/OFDA Assistance to Dominican Republic	\$50,000
USAID/OFDA Assistance to Haiti.....	\$100,000
USAID/OFDA Assistance to Jamaica	\$100,000
Total USAID Humanitarian Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean for Hurricanes	\$350,000

CURRENT SITUATION

Cuba

- According to OCHA, Hurricane Gustav severely damaged an estimated 53 percent of the houses in the Cuban municipalities of Los Palacios, La Palma, Bahía Honda, San Cristóbal, Viñales, Consolación del Sur, Candelaria, and Pinar del Río. The Pinar del Río Civil Defense Committee reported that the hurricane damaged approximately 86,000 houses in that province alone.

- Strong winds and flooding damaged numerous private and public buildings and facilities and disrupted the electrical power infrastructure and communications in affected areas. Crops, including banana, citrus, coffee, rice, sugar cane, and tobacco, sustained significant damage in the province of Pinar del Río, according to OCHA.

Dominican Republic

- According to OCHA, Tropical Storm Gustav displaced more than 6,000 people, damaged 1,253 houses, and caused 502 people to move to temporary shelters. On August 26, IFRC reported that a rise in the level of the Ozama River caused a mudslide, resulting in eight deaths in the area of Guadalupe. Both storms damaged infrastructure, including nine of the country's water systems. By September 2, a third storm, Tropical Storm Hanna, had passed north of the island, bringing additional rainfall and high winds to areas previously affected by Tropical Storms Fay and Gustav.

Haiti

- On August 28, the first member of a four-person USAID/OFDA team arrived in Haiti. By September 4, all team members had arrived and had begun working closely with USAID/Haiti to coordinate the U.S. Government's humanitarian response with the Government of Haiti (GOH), U.N. agencies, and other humanitarian organizations. Overflights, assessments, and relief agency meetings began on August 28, and the first shipment of relief commodities arrived on September 4.
- On August 30, the GOH Civil Protection Directorate announced that flooding had led to 76 deaths, left 9 people missing, injured 35 people, forced 8,789 people to evacuate to shelters, destroyed 2,121 houses, and damaged an additional 8,155 houses. Flooding and landslides cut off land routes and hampered humanitarian access.
- On September 4, the USAID/OFDA team reported that overflights had revealed that extensive agricultural areas of the Artibonite Valley are flooded and many crops remain underwater. The team also reported that the cumulative effects of tropical storms have impacted 9 out of 10 Haitian departments and isolated numerous areas in the southern peninsula.
- According to the USAID/OFDA team, the relief community is working to launch initial damage and needs assessments and to identify areas that may be inaccessible following the flooding. GOH authorities maintain a heightened state of red alert for seven departments, while the remaining affected areas are on orange alert.

Jamaica

- On September 2, the U.S. Embassy in Kingston reported that the storm directly affected more than 4,000 others. The storm caused substantial damage to infrastructure and flooding in at least 72 communities, rendering 120 roads impassable and affecting 65 percent of the country's water supply. The storm also inflicted heavy losses on the agriculture sector, particularly affecting the banana crop, a primary export commodity. According to IFRC, the storm damaged 70 percent of the banana crop in St. Mary and 100 percent of the crop in St. Thomas.

USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Cuba

- On September 3, U.S. Chief of Mission Jonathan D. Farrar declared a disaster due to the effects of the hurricane. In response, USAID/OFDA has approved \$100,000 in emergency relief funds to support relief operations of humanitarian assistance organizations.

Dominican Republic

- On September 3, U.S. Ambassador P. Robert Fannin issued a disaster declaration due to the effects of the tropical storms. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$50,000 through USAID/Dominican Republic for the local procurement and distribution of emergency relief supplies, including clean water storage containers, personal hygiene kits, and bedding items. The USAID/OFDA regional office in Costa Rica, in coordination with USAID/Dominican Republic, continues to monitor the situation to determine whether additional assistance is needed.

Haiti

- On September 2, U.S. Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson issued a disaster declaration in response to Hurricane Gustav and resulting flooding throughout Haiti. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$100,000 through USAID/Haiti for the purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies for displaced populations and for the support of early recovery activities. On September 4, a commercial aircraft arrived in Port-au-Prince, delivering USAID/OFDA emergency relief supplies valued at approximately \$335,000, including transport. The commodities include 5,088 hygiene kits, 10,800 ten-liter water containers, and 500 rolls of plastic sheeting. Implementing partner International Organization for Migration (IOM) is preparing to transport supplies for 1,000 to 2,000 families in Gonaives, Artibonite Department, on September 5.

Jamaica

- On September 2, U.S. Ambassador Brenda LaGrange Johnson declared a disaster due to the effects of the tropical storm. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$100,000 through USAID/Jamaica to Jamaica's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) to support aerial reconnaissance and an air bridge to reach communities that have become isolated due to road damage, as well as the purchase and distribution of emergency relief supplies. Following the storm, a USAID/OFDA regional advisor and consultant also deployed to support USAID/Jamaica and is conducting surveys of affected areas. On September 4, ODPEM relief supplies arrived in Kingston, including approximately 1,536 hygiene kits, 270 rolls of plastic sheeting, 7,800 jerry cans, and 3,425 wool blankets.

USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO CUBA

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
To Be Determined	Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$100,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO CUBA IN FY 2008			\$100,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO CUBA IN FY 2008			\$100,000

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 4, 2008.

USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
USAID/Dominican Republic	Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$50,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN FY 2008			\$50,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN FY 2008			\$50,000

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 4, 2008.

USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
USAID/Haiti	Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$100,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$100,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI IN FY 2008			\$100,000

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 4, 2008.

USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO JAMAICA

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
ODPEM	Emergency Relief Supplies	Affected Areas	\$100,000
TOTAL USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO JAMAICA IN FY 2008			\$100,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO JAMAICA IN FY 2008			\$100,000
TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN FOR HURRICANES IN FY 2008			\$350,000

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of September 4, 2008.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Latin America and the Caribbean may be available at www.reliefweb.int.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, warehouse space, etc); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int