



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

***Dominican Republic and Haiti – Floods***

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

June 2, 2004

**BACKGROUND**

- Several days of heavy rains in late May caused rivers to overflow in areas near the southern border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The flooding devastated entire communities, caused massive loss of life, displaced tens of thousands of people on both sides of the border, and resulted in sizeable crop and livestock losses. The damage to highways and village roads also isolated communities from ongoing relief efforts.
- In the Dominican Republic, the Emergency Operations Center (COE) reports that, as of June 1, the flooding has left 414 people dead (393 in Jimaní) and 274 missing, all of whom are from Jimaní.
- Field reports indicate that the floods in Haiti have killed at least 1,068 people, and left 1,600 people missing and 25,000 people in need of emergency food and non-food assistance. The flooding has also displaced more than 16,000 people in Haiti; of those, 10,000 people are in Mapou and 6,000 are in Fonds Verrettes.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

*Dominican Republic*

- On May 27, a two-person team consisting of a USAID/OFDA Regional Advisor and USAID/OFDA Consultant traveled to the town of Jimaní and reported that the flooding affected 29,000 families in Independencia Province, the area most impacted by the flooding in the Dominican Republic. Although the floods did not cause significant damage to the water distribution network or the town's storage tank, no potable water was available in Jimaní at the time of the team's visit.
- On May 28, the USAID/OFDA team traveled to the Bajo Yuna area due to reports that the Hatillo Dam could overflow and become a threat to local communities. The assessment team reported that the water level behind the dam is currently dropping, and at present the dam does not pose a threat.
- The USAID/OFDA team also visited several other areas, including the town of Arenoso where local Catholic priests reported that the flooding affected at least 12,000 people in the area and destroyed 7,600 hectares of rice fields, or 45 percent of the cultivated area in the zone. The team reported that no potable water was available in the Arenoso area and, that until the flood waters recede, damage to the water distribution system will be impossible to determine.
- A five-person U.N. Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team is currently in the Dominican Republic to facilitate coordination among the sectoral groups that have been established for water and sanitation, health, and other activities.
- On June 1, U.N. Development Program (UNDP) held a coordination meeting, attended by USAID/OFDA, USAID/Dominican Republic, the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Commission for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHO), the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), and U.N. agencies including the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO), the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). The representatives of the organizations present agreed that most relief organizations are transitioning from an emergency phase of the response to a rehabilitation phase.
- A rapid assessment of damage to the agricultural sector carried out by the Dominican Republic Ministry of Agriculture indicated that the flooding has caused damage to approximately 14 percent of areas under cultivation in the south, north, and northeast regions, particularly affecting rice, banana, tomato, red bean, watermelon, and lettuce crops.

*Haiti*

- According to a May 28 USAID/Haiti Situation Report, the Civil Protection Department (DPC) reported that the total number of dead and missing in the West and Southwest departments is at least 638 people. The areas most affected by the flooding are the South-East Department (Mapou/Belle Anse, Grand Gosier, Bodary, Thiotte) and the West Department (Fonds Verrettes). USAID/Haiti reported that death tolls reports in these communities vary according to the source, making the final count of dead and missing difficult to determine.
- The USAID/Haiti report indicated that much of the town of Mapou remains under water, preventing assessment teams from reaching many houses, but that at least 10,000 people are in urgent need of assistance. Further assessments will be made by boat. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), approximately 175 bodies have been recovered in Mapou, and an estimated 1,500 people are missing.

- USAID/Haiti stated that approximately 165 deaths have been reported in Fonds Verrettes. At the May 27 UN OCHA coordination meeting, relief organizations expressed concern about the security of the affected populations in Fonds Verrettes and Mapou due to the likelihood of more rain.
- U.S.-led Multinational Interim Force (MIF) troops posted in Haiti since the departure of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in February 2004 have provided support to relief efforts. Since May 26, MIF troops have transported 150 metric tons (MT) of humanitarian assistance, in addition to international and non-governmental organization personnel, by helicopter to Fonds Verrettes, Mapou, and other flood-affected areas.
- MIF troops stopped all helicopter support flights on June 1 as they prepared to transition to the U.N. peacekeeping mission, resulting in a need for alternate air support for the delivery of emergency relief. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) reported that the road to Fonds Verrettes is now open for light pickup trucks and other four wheel drive vehicles, but it is still extremely difficult to bring in larger trucks. Mapou remains inaccessible by road. Increasing amounts of non-food donations, including generators, blankets, buckets, and shovels, are arriving in Haiti and will remain in Port-au-Prince until alternate air support is procured.
- The situation in the Mapou area is problematic as the nearby mud lake created by the flooding contains many bodies and dead animals. ICRC is working to retrieve and bury bodies. Residents in a few small villages on the steep hills outside of Mapou are also at high risk due to large amounts of mud and gravel that have accumulated on a rock shelf above the village. ICRC is working with the Government of Haiti (GOH) to temporarily relocate these people.
- According to a May 30 UN OCHA report, an UNDAC team has deployed to affected areas in Haiti to coordinate ongoing evaluations and deliveries of relief supplies.
- According to a May 31 UN OCHA report, the floods in Haiti have affected more than 9,200 children, including 1,720 children under the age of five. UNICEF has expressed concern over the high number of children affected by the floods, as children are particularly vulnerable to water and sanitation-related diseases, and many have lost parents or entire families.

#### **USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

##### *Dominican Republic*

- On May 26, U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic Hans H. Hertell issued a disaster declaration due to the magnitude of damage caused by the flooding.
- USAID/OFDA has provided \$300,000 in emergency relief funds for the Dominican Republic, in support of the following relief activities: \$90,000 to World Vision to purchase and distribute emergency non-food relief supplies, including hygiene kits, mosquito nets, cooking kits, bedding, plastic sheeting for temporary shelters, and small potable water containers; \$10,000 to USAID/Dominican Republic to procure fuel directly for use by the Government of the Dominican Republic to facilitate road repair and to improve humanitarian access to the affected areas; \$100,000 to the American Red Cross (AmRC) in support of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Crescent Societies (IFRC) appeal to support relief activities in the Dominican Republic; and \$100,000 to the PAHO appeal for emergency medical activities.
- On May 26, a USAID/OFDA Regional Advisor and a USAID/OFDA Consultant traveled to the Dominican Republic to conduct damage and needs assessments and to work closely with USAID/Dominican Republic and other relief agencies. On May 28, a second USAID/OFDA Regional Advisor traveled to the Dominican Republic to assist the USAID/OFDA team in country.

##### *Haiti*

- On May 26, U.S. Ambassador to Haiti James B. Foley issued a disaster declaration due to the damage caused by the flooding.
- USAID/OFDA has provided \$300,000 in emergency relief funds to Haiti, in support of the following relief activities: \$140,000 to CRS to purchase and distribute emergency non-food relief supplies, including hygiene kits, cooking kits, blankets, and water containers; \$10,000 to USAID/Haiti for the procurement of fuel for use by the Government of Haiti's Ministry of Public Works to carry out urgent road repair in the affected area; and \$150,000 to AmRC in support of the IFRC appeal to support relief activities in Haiti.
- On June 2, a USAID/OFDA Regional Advisor traveled from the Dominican Republic to Haiti to coordinate with other organizations and participate in damage and needs assessments.

**USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
American Red Cross	Support for IFRC appeal for relief activities	Dominican Republic	\$100,000
PAHO	Support for PAHO appeal for emergency medical activities	Dominican Republic	\$100,000
USAID/Dominican Republic	Procurement of fuel for road repair	Dominican Republic	\$10,000
World Vision	Purchase and distribution of relief supplies	Dominican Republic	\$90,000
<b>USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.....</b>			<b>\$300,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of June 2, 2004, for the current flooding emergency.

**USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI**

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>2</sup></b>			
American Red Cross	Support for IFRC appeal for relief activities	Haiti	\$150,000
Catholic Relief Services	Purchase and distribution of relief supplies	Haiti	\$140,000
USAID/Haiti	Procurement of fuel for road repair	Haiti	\$10,000
<b>USAID/OFDA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI .....</b>			<b>\$300,000</b>

<sup>2</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents committed and/or obligated amount as of June 2, 2004, for the current flooding emergency.

**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. For a list of organizations that are accepting donations for their response efforts, go to [www.interaction.org/DR/index.html](http://www.interaction.org/DR/index.html).
- 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; ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information on making donations and volunteering can be found at:
  - The Center for International Disaster Information: [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org)
  - InterAction: [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org) -> "How You Can Help"
- Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [www.reliefweb.org](http://www.reliefweb.org).

USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID web site at [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/disaster\\_assistance/](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/).