



SITUATION AT A GLANCE

- Hurricane Maria, the third major hurricane to pass through the Caribbean in the last few weeks, has reached a Category 5 and is expected to hit Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands head-on.
- Irma response has been delayed as aid agencies and host governments make preparations for Maria, including evacuations of some areas of the Caribbean.
- Dominica, one of the first islands to be hit by Maria, sustained heavy damage, according to initial reports.
- International Medical Corps' Emergency Response Team is in the Caribbean, coordinating with response agencies and pre-positioning supplies for the aftermath of Maria.

SITUATION UPDATE

Hurricane Maria

Hurricane Maria has shifted the focus of humanitarian actors in the Caribbean from Irma response to Maria preparations as the storm quickly strengthened from a Category 1 to a Category 5 in 24 hours. Many island governments expressed concern that the debris from Hurricane Irma would cause even more damage during Hurricane Maria.

On Monday evening, Hurricane Maria made landfall on the small island of Dominica. News is now just starting to emerge from the island; initial reports suggest widespread damage to infrastructure as well as landslides from the rain. Winds, which reached over 150mph, ripped roofs from buildings throughout the island. Dominica, a former English colony, is home to approximately 72,000 people.

The islands of Guadalupe and St. Lucia reported flooding and power outages. Antigua and Barbuda were also in the path of the storm; Antigua residents were advised to withstand the tropical storm winds indoors until it passes. Barbuda residents were all evacuated in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma.

Hurricane Irma

Antigua and Barbuda's government established a distribution center on Antigua where evacuated Barbudans can obtain food, water, clothing, and other relief items. Most evacuees are staying with host families instead of formal shelters. Nearly all infrastructure was destroyed by Irma on Barbuda.

In the Bahamas, populations on the outer islands that had been evacuated were repatriated by last Monday, September 17th. Ragged Island, which was nearly entirely destroyed, has undergone needs assessments as the government prepares to clean up debris and assist the population, which was mostly fisherman and their families.

On St. Martin, fuel supply has reached near-normal capacity. Princess Juliana International Airport is functioning and commercial cargo plans are landing. Access to safe drinking water remains limited for the French side of the island, and the government has ordered the island to prepare for Hurricane Maria. Evacuation sights have been prepared on the Dutch side of the island with the capacity for 1,800 people. Security is still an issue on St. Martin.

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS RESPONSE

International Medical Corps' Emergency Response Team is in the Caribbean, coordinating with response agencies and prepositioning supplies for Hurricane Maria. Medical supplies are pre-positioned for distribution, and further supplies are being prepared for humanitarian assistance to the affected populations.

In Florida, International Medical Corps is supporting a network 30 health clinics that reaches 80,000 underserved men, women, and children in and around Fort Myers, FL.

Contact Information:

Ian Rodgers, International Medical Corps Director of Emergency Response
IRodgers@internationalmedicalcorps.org