



*Hurricanes Irma and Maria wreaked havoc in the Caribbean in September. Source: UN OCHA*

### SITUATION UPDATE

Hurricane Maria, the third massive hurricane to hit the Caribbean during the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season, traveled over Dominica on September 18<sup>th</sup> as a Category 5 storm. It then impacted the island of Antigua and Barbuda, which was still reeling over Irma a week prior. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, it impacted Monserrat and St. Kitts and Nevis before moving over the Virgin Islands on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico suffered Hurricane Maria’s Category 4 winds last Wednesday, causing widespread damage to the United States Territory. In just 24 hours, the Hurricane dropped 40 inches of rain on parts of the island, and flooding is affecting thousands. Over the weekend, the Guajataca Dam failed, putting the lives of 70,000 people in nearby communities at risk. It’s estimated that residents will be without power for months, and the Governor of Puerto Rico called the storm the “most devastating storm to hit the island this century, if not in modern history.”

An estimated 80% of crops have been destroyed. 85% of Puerto Rico’s food is imported, much of it from nearby islands that were also impacted during the 2017 Hurricane season.

### SITUATION AT A GLANCE

International Medical Corps is currently assessing needs in Puerto Rico.

Electricity is expected to be out for months. Normal flight schedule has not resumed in Puerto Rico.

The Caribbean ERT is establishing partnerships throughout the Caribbean to support mental health and primary health care initiatives.

Dominica appears to be the hardest-hit island, with all agricultural crops destroyed and 98% of homes suffering significant damage.

Cell phone coverage is sparse – 27% of San Juan, the capital, has cellular coverage. Humanitarian organizations are bringing in their own satellite communication equipment. Only 65% of fixed lines can make long distance calls, and only 40% of water service is functioning.

There are limited flights incoming and outgoing to San Juan Airport. Airlines have been impacted by the lack of communications equipment functioning. Thousands have sheltered at San Juan Airport, which does not have electricity.

Electricity is expected to take months to re-establish throughout the island.

### Dominica

The island of Dominica has suffered widespread damage. 100% of the island has been impacted, and all agriculture crops have been destroyed. Farm housing, irrigation infrastructure, feeder roads, and crop and livestock production have all been damaged. Agricultural tools and infrastructure have been reported missing or damaged. Animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, pigs, and other livestock have also been lost.

Power systems, water supplies, and communications systems are all down. 98% of homes have significant damage to roofs and 50% have frame damage.

Airports do not have functioning telecommunications systems. Canefield Airport sustained substantial damage to the air control tower, air terminal building, and fire station. The runway is functional. Douglas Charles Airport has backup generators functioning; the roof of the air control tower and air terminal building were damaged.

Immediate needs include food, water, building and roofing materials, generators, communications equipment, hygiene kits, water purification kits, fuel, mattresses, cots, flashlights, kitchen sets, and more.

### St. Kitts and Nevis

St. Kitts and Nevis sustained substantial damage. In St. Kitts, the Island Main Road was significantly damaged due to coastal erosion; electrical poles and wires are down. There was some damage to roofs of residential housing. Nevis sustained damaged to health care centers and main roads and jetties. The agricultural sector was also significantly damage. 80% of electricity has been restored and recovery efforts are ongoing.

## **INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS RESPONSE**

International Medical Corps is now responding throughout the US and its territories and the Caribbean to ensure that families and communities are safe, healthy and have the resources they need to recover.

International Medical Corps deployed a team to Puerto Rico, where 13 people have died, to help meet the most urgent needs and support recovery efforts for those impacted by the devastation of Hurricane Maria. Assessments are under way, which will allow for a scale up in support in the coming days.

On other Caribbean islands, International Medical Corps is collaborating with responders to ensure that doctors, nurses and other medical professionals and supplies can reach the most affected areas. Our teams report that the most

immediate urgent needs – food, water and shelter – are being met for most of those affected. Teams are now assessing recovery needs across the islands, including Dominica, to determine how we can best get the health systems back up and running. In addition, we are collaborating with the University of the West Indies to provide mental health and psychosocial support services to those affected by the crises across USVI, BVI, and other islands. And in Haiti, International Medical Corps teams continue to expand their cholera treatment and prevention work, ensuring that families recovering from the impact of Hurricane Irma are able to prevent the spread of this deadly disease.

In Florida, International Medical Corps is supporting a network of 30 local clinics in and around Fort Myers, an area hit hard by Hurricane Irma. With the clinic's 500 staff largely displaced from their homes, International Medical Corps will provide sanitation facilities so that staff can return to work; in addition, our teams are helping restore power and rehabilitate the network's clinic in Bonita Springs, which serves some 30,000 people. Moving forward, we will be collaborating with a clinic network in Miami-Dade County as well, helping to restore health services to communities affected by the storm.

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