



The damage in Dominica following Hurricane Maria is extensive, and recovery efforts are slow. International Medical Corps is supporting surge medical teams and WASH programming as the island struggles to rebuild.

SITUATION UPDATE

Background

This year's Atlantic hurricane season was one of the most active since the advent of satellite technology, with six major hurricanes (Category 3+) and ten hurricanes total. Hurricane Irma, which developed into a Category 5 on September 5, reached peak wind speeds of 185mph as it moved through the northern Leeward Islands. Irma was recorded as the 11th most intense hurricane in the Atlantic basin, maintaining peak intensity for 37 hours.

Irma's destruction was most felt on the islands of Barbuda, Saint Martin, Anguilla, the Virgin Islands, and the United States – specifically, Florida. In Florida, evacuations were ordered along the coastal areas. Ninety people were killed as a result of the storm, many from drowning and trauma. International Medical Corps pre-positioned an assessment team in Florida prior to the hurricane making landfall, and additional assessment teams were operating in the Caribbean when Hurricane Maria, the fourth massive hurricane to strike the Caribbean during the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season, traveled over Dominica on September 18th as a Category 5 storm, and later over Puerto Rico on September 20th. The devastation was widespread – ninety-six people died and the damage estimates are at over \$51 billion USD across the Caribbean.

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

International Medical Corps is responding to the aftermath of multiple hurricanes in Puerto Rico, Dominica, and Florida.

In Dominica, International Medical Corps has deployed medical volunteers to support local health facilities and mobile medical units, supporting 14 health facilities and providing more than 300 consultations to date. Moving forward, services will include facility rehabilitation; water, sanitation and hygiene services; and mental health and psychosocial support.

In Puerto Rico, International Medical Corps is collaborating with a network of nearly 70 local clinics to restore power, clean water, communications and support rehabilitation of services and access to health care for communities outside of San Juan.

In Dominica, winds reached 160 mph, ripping the roofs off most homes and cutting the island off from cellular, radio and internet services. In a dramatic narration of events on Facebook, Dominica's Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit described the devastation as "mind boggling" before communications on the island went dark. Maria affected 100% of Dominica's residents, inflicting serious damage to roads, public buildings, homes, airports, and all of the island's 53 health facilities. 98% of homes and buildings on the island incurred damage, half of which had their frames destroyed. The high winds ripping all the leaves off vegetation, uprooting trees, and ruining the island's rainforests. All banana and tuber plantations were lost, as were corresponding farm equipment and livestock – significantly impacting future income and livelihoods for the island's residents. Today, Dominica's recovery is progressing slowly, as food, water, electricity, and communications capabilities remain scarce across the island. Shelter continues to be a challenge for those whose homes were damaged or destroyed, and access to clean water and health care is also a challenge.

Maria hit Puerto Rico as a Category 4 storm, causing widespread flooding, high winds, and storm surges. The entirety of Puerto Rico's aging electrical system was downed, subsequently affecting the water system. In the town of Toa Baja, flood waters rose six feet within thirty minutes, reaching fifteen feet in some areas. San Juan incurred widespread flooding. 100% of the island's crops were damaged. Fuel supply was cut short, and the island's airports were completely non-functional. Today, 75% of Puerto Rico remains without power. 25% still do not have access to water, and those with water are advised to boil or purify water with chlorine prior to drinking it – a task that is difficult without electricity. Many health facilities are only partially operational, if at all – without generators or fuel for generators, they are unable to operate life-saving equipment. The electrical grid is slowly coming back online, but it could take months before full restoration is a reality.

International Medical Corps Responds: [Dominica](#)

In Dominica, as part of its immediate response efforts, International Medical Corps mobilized an Interagency Emergency Health Kit that has been distributed to the Salibya Health Center, Princess Margaret Hospital and Newtown health facility. The kit has enough medication to provide 10,000 people with basic medications and supplies for up to three months; supplies will be distributed from these major health facilities to local health facilities as needed.

In addition, International Medical Corps deployed three volunteer medical teams to some of the hardest hit areas of the island in St. John and St. Andrew's parish – home to a combined 18,000 people and some of the island's most heavily populated areas. In these parishes there is one hospital, two "T3 facilities" (moderately sized health centers with emergency room capabilities) and 11 "T1 facilities" (small health centers with limited services). Volunteer teams will be supporting all of these facilities and providing much needed relief for local staff, many of whom have been on call since the hurricane struck.

The rotating teams of three are made up of doctors and nurses. The first medical team has been embedded at Portsmouth Hospital in St. John's Parish to provide surge capacity to existing staff and relieve the overwhelming workload. The second has



International Medical Corps pre-positioned an IEHK prior to Hurricane Maria. It was subsequently distributed to health facilities on the island of Dominica. Photo Credit: Ken Cedeno

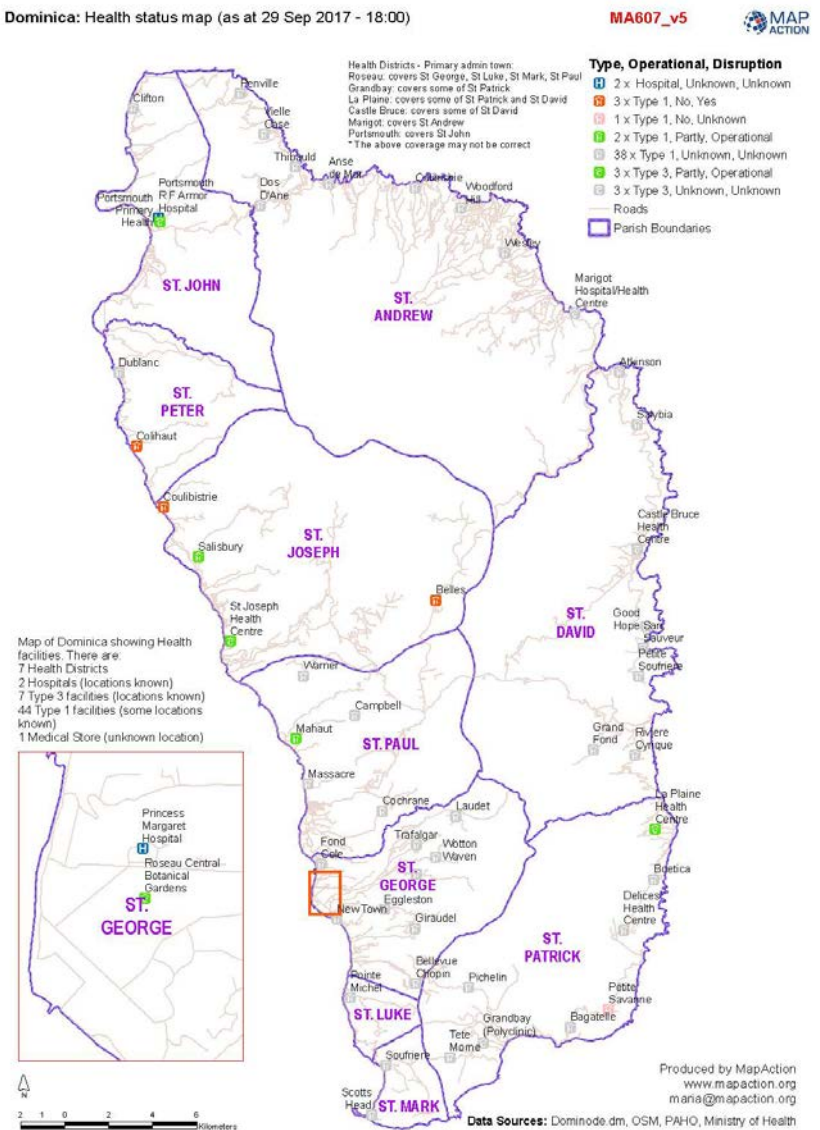
been operating as a mobile medical unit in St. Andrew Parish in the northeast, rotating through community health clinics, assisting head nurses and making home visits to vulnerable households, including the elderly and single-headed households. To date, the teams have provided services to 337 people. A third team has been deployed to support Marigot Hospital in St. Andrew's Parish.

With transportation across Dominica and affected islands so difficult, International Medical Corps immediate response also included providing an Air Bridge with regular flights into Dominica, Antigua and the British Virgin Islands to bring medical volunteers, first responders, patients and government officials to the most devastated regions, as well as transport urgently-needed medical supplies and equipment. To date, the Air Bridge has provided more than 80 flights for nearly 200 responders and patients across the region, as well as medical equipment, specimen samples, and other urgently-needed supplies.

International Medical Corps, in collaboration with Pharmacists Without Borders, is also supporting the Central Medical Store (CMS) of Dominica's Ministry of Health. Rotating teams of two volunteer pharmacists are assisting the CMS to sort, organize, and inventory medicines and supplies, including assessing which medications and supplies were damaged by the storm, and inventorying new medication and supplies that have arrived in the storm's aftermath. They have also updated stock records, inventory levels, and established records of medical demand based on consumption. In the coming week, the teams will facilitate pharmaceutical distribution from the CMS to hospitals and clinics, providing supply chain support that will ensure local facilities and communities have access to the care and supplies they need.

Moving forward, International Medical Corps will support recovery efforts to restore access to health care and health facilities on Dominica, including rehabilitation of health facilities. In addition, International Medical Corps will provide water, sanitation and hygiene services including the rehabilitation of water systems in St. Johns and St. Andrews to provide some 70,000 liters of clean water per day for residents; distribute of hygiene kits and water storage cans to keep families safe and healthy; and provide training for community leaders on water testing to help ensure that families and communities continue to have access to clean water. In addition, International Medical Corps is expanding its services to include mental health and psychosocial support programming, including psychological first aid training.

Dominica: Health status map (as at 29 Sep 2017 - 18:00)



International Medical Corps Responds: Puerto Rico

International Medical Corps team arrived in Puerto Rico on within days of the hurricane making landfall to begin immediate response efforts on the island. International Medical Corps is collaborating with La Asociación de Salud Primaria de Puerto Rico (ASPPR), a non-profit health network of nearly 70 clinics supporting vulnerable populations in Puerto Rico. With power still down across most of the island, challenges in accessing clean water, and a lack of fuel, International Medical Corps has donated seven generators to ASPPR, helping to maintain cold chain for medication and allowing clinics to keep their doors open longer. In addition, six 500 gallon water storage bladders were also donated to ASPPR, helping to ensure access to clean water for health facilities. The names of the clinics receiving donations to date are listed below.



*Many of Puerto Rico's citizens are still without running water. Here, a man collects water that has been trucked into his neighborhood.
Photo credit: Ken Cedeno*

Donations to ASPPR Clinics, Puerto Rico			
Generator	Clarke EDG6000 46KvA	Centros de Servicios Primarios de Salud, Inc.	Florida
Generator	Clarke EDG6000 46KvA	Neomed Center	Gurabo
Generator	Clarke EDG6000 46KvA	Migrant Health Center Wester Region, Inc.	Mayaguez
Generator	Clarke EDG6000 46KvA	Centros de Salud Primarios de Patillas, Inc.	Patillas
Generator	Clarke EDG6000 46KvA	Atlantic Medical Center, Inc.	Barceloneta
Generator	HIPOWER 80kVA	Corporacion Sanos	Caguas
Generator	HIPOWER 80kVA	Salud Integral en la Montaña, Inc.	Naranjito
Bladder	Potable Water, 500gal	Health Promed	Vieques
Bladder	Potable Water, 500gal	Hospital General Castañer, Inc.	Jajuya
Bladder	Potable Water, 500gal	Centro de Servicios Primarios de Patillas	Santa Isabel
Bladder	Potable Water, 500gal	Centro de Servicios Primarios de Patillas	Maunabo
Bladder	Potable Water, 500gal	Salud Integral de la Montana	Orocovis
Bladder	Potable Water, 500gal	COSSMA- Las Piedras	La Piedras

Moving forward, and to support long-term recovery efforts, teams will be working with an anticipated 20 clinics rebuild and rehabilitate facility infrastructure, and provide urgently needed grants and resources, helping clinics address their most urgent and pertinent needs. This includes supporting staff, who are overworked and facing the same challenges as the general population – lack of access to electricity and potable water. And, we are distributing hygiene kits, wound care kits, solar lights and other supplies that can help families stay healthy in the aftermath of crises.

International Medical Corps will be working closely with ASPPR to identify and address any further gaps as support is increased over the next few weeks.

[International Medical Corps Responds: Florida](#)

In Florida, International Medical Corps continues to support 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, we are providing sanitation facilities so that staff can return to work. We are also helping restore power and rehabilitate the network's clinic in Bonita Springs, which serves some 30,000 people. In addition, we are also partnering with a clinic network in Miami-Dade County, helping to provide low or no-cost medication for vulnerable families, ensuring that they continue to receive care for chronic diseases such as diabetes and easing their financial burden in the wake of the storms as they rebuild.

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