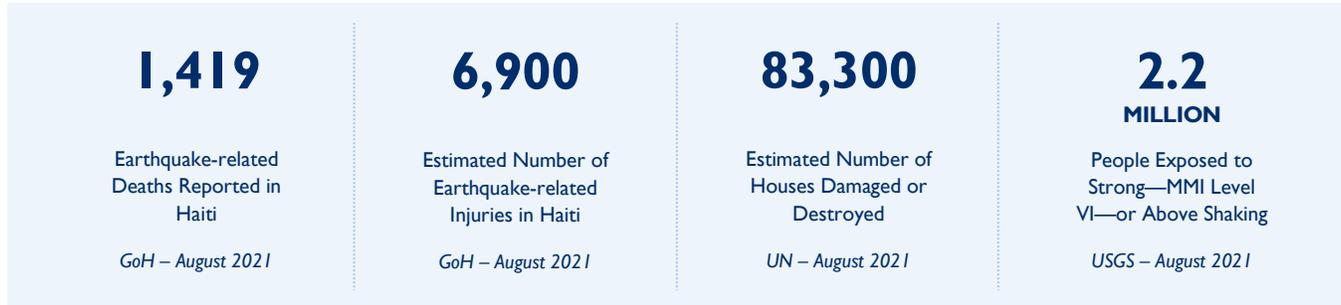


Haiti – Earthquake

AUGUST 17, 2021

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- The August 14 earthquake results in at least 1,419 deaths, injures more than 6,900 people, and damages or destroys an estimated 83,300 houses as of August 16, according to the GoH and UN.
- DART USAR personnel and disaster experts arrive in Sud via USCG helicopter to begin assessment and response operations, determining no rescues are needed in assessed areas.
- USAID/BHA partner WFP commences barge and helicopter transportation services to facilitate the movement of relief commodities and personnel within Haiti.
- Tropical Storm Grace makes landfall over southwestern Haiti as a tropical depression, generating flooding, heavy rains, and strong winds on August 16 and 17.



TIMELINE

August 14, 2021

At 8:29 a.m. local time, a magnitude 7.2 earthquake strikes southwestern Haiti at a depth of 6.2 miles

August 14, 2021

U.S. Ambassador Michele J. Sison declares a disaster; USAID/BHA activates a DART and Response Management Team (RMT)

August 15, 2021

USAID/BHA deploys additional DART staff to Haiti, including 65 USAR personnel

August 15, 2021

USCG deploys 2 helicopters to assist with medical evacuations and transport DART staff in Haiti

August 15, 2021

DoD deploys 8 helicopters to support USAID/BHA response efforts

August 15, 2021

USAID/BHA releases 10 MT in contingency food stocks to WFP for emergency operations

August 16, 2021

DART USAR experts conduct assessment and response activities in Sud

August 16, 2021

Tropical Storm Grace makes landfall over southwestern Haiti as a tropical depression, generating heavy rains and strong winds

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Earthquake Results in at Least 1,419 Deaths, Damages or Destroys an Estimated 83,000 Houses

The August 14 earthquake had resulted in at least 1,419 deaths and injury to more than 6,900 people across southwestern Haiti as of August 16, generating and exacerbating humanitarian needs in the country, according to the Government of Haiti (GoH) and the UN. Casualties are particularly pronounced in Sud Department, where the earthquake caused at least 1,133 deaths and injured an additional 5,207 people. Authorities also reported at least 162 and 122 earthquake-related deaths in Grand'Anse and Nippes departments, respectively, and two deaths in Nord-Ouest Department. Furthermore, the earthquake destroyed more than 37,300 houses and damaged an additional 46,000 houses in southwestern Haiti, displacing thousands of households amid Haiti's ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak and strong winds and heavy rains due to Tropical Storm Grace on August 16 and 17, the UN reports.

Relief actors have identified food, health, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance as priority needs among earthquake-affected populations and stressed the importance of ongoing search-and-rescue operations to extract people from collapsed structures. In Sud, many displaced households are residing in open-air, makeshift dwellings, heightening their exposure to severe weather events, protection risks, and other adverse humanitarian conditions, USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) personnel report. Meanwhile, functioning health care facilities across affected areas have insufficient medical supplies and staff, while others remain nonfunctional due to earthquake-related damage and inadequate access to electricity and water.

DART USAR Experts Commence Assessment and Response Activities in Southwestern Haiti

On August 16, two DART assessment teams—each comprising 12 urban search-and-rescue (USAR) personnel and USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) disaster experts—travelled to Sud's Camp-Perrin, Les Cayes, and Maniche towns via U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) helicopter to commence assessment and response activities in affected areas. The assessment teams determined that no rescues were required in assessed areas, as local first responders had conducted needed rescues from compromised structures. In Maniche, DART staff determined that the earthquake had damaged the town's water purification system, likely compounding WASH needs in the area. In addition, DART members visited hospitals in affected areas, noting that most health care facilities lacked sufficient fuel, personnel, and supplies and were attempting to transfer patients with severe trauma injuries to Haiti's capital city of Port-au-Prince. DART assessment teams are continuing USAR operations on August 17, while USCG personnel continue to conduct medical evacuations from earthquake-affected areas to Port-au-Prince via helicopter.

Infrastructure Damage, Insecurity Hamper Relief Operations; WFP Negotiates Humanitarian Corridor to Affected Areas

Earthquake-related infrastructure damage and insecurity—primarily resulting from organized criminal group (OCG) activity—continue to hamper the movement of humanitarian commodities and staff to affected areas, the UN reports. As of August 16, an earthquake-induced landslide continued to block transportation along National Highway 7 connecting Les Cayes and Grand’Anse’s Jérémie city. In addition, humanitarian organizations report that the main road from Port-au-Prince to affected areas in southwestern Haiti—National Highway 2—remains largely impassible due to OCG-related insecurity.

However, relief actors negotiated the safe passage of multiple humanitarian convoys from Port-au-Prince to southwestern Haiti on August 15 and 16, delivering life-saving relief items to affected households, the UN reports. Moreover, USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) negotiated a one-week humanitarian corridor with OCG leaders and plans to commence daily humanitarian convoys from Port-au-Prince to Les Cayes on August 17. The UN agency is using 10 metric tons (MT) of USAID/BHA-funded contingency food commodities in Haiti to deliver hot meals to more than 3,000 people in hospitals in Les Cayes and Jérémie in the coming days. WFP is also procuring 3 MT of ready-to-eat meals to support individuals in health care facilities until the distribution of hot meals commences.

Meanwhile, WFP has activated a UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) helicopter to transport GoH and humanitarian personnel and relief items to affected areas in response to continued access constraints via land. WFP is also commencing USAID/BHA-supported barge services to facilitate the movement of additional commodities and personnel from Port-au-Prince to locations along the northern coast of Haiti’s southwestern peninsula in the coming days.

Tropical Storm Grace Makes Landfall Over Southwestern Haiti, Causing Flooding, Heavy Rains, and Strong Winds

Tropical Storm Grace made landfall over southwestern Haiti as a tropical depression with sustained wind speeds of up to 35 miles per hour on August 16, resulting in heavy rains and flooding, according to the National Hurricane Center and DART personnel. The system subsequently strengthened to a tropical storm and was tracking west-northwestward between Cuba and Jamaica as of the morning of August 17. The storm posed acute risks to displaced and other earthquake-affected populations in Haiti, particularly those residing in makeshift displacement sites or open-air dwellings. USAID/BHA continues to closely monitor the effects of Tropical Storm Grace in close coordination with the GoH and humanitarian partners.

KEY FIGURES



65

USAR personnel deployed to Haiti with the DART

NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

URBAN SEARCH-AND-RESCUE

Following the earthquake, the GoH requested international assistance for USAR support. A USAR team from Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, including 65 search-and-rescue personnel and four canines, subsequently deployed alongside DART members, arriving in Haiti on August 15. The USAR team traveled with 52,000 pounds of specialized tools and equipment, such as hydraulic concrete breaking equipment, saws, torches, and drills, along with advanced medical equipment for search-and-

rescue operations. Additional USAR supplies arrived in Haiti on August 17.

Two USCG helicopters deployed to Haiti began transporting DART assessment teams—including USAR staff—to Sud on August 16; USAR activities in other affected areas are ongoing. Meanwhile, USAID/BHA partner WFP provided six vehicles to transport USAR personnel in Les Cayes. Separately, a USAR team from Colombia comprising 28 personnel and two canines is also deploying to Haiti, according to international media.

USAID/BHA USAR teams consist of 19 functional positions, staffed by experienced emergency managers, construction riggers, hazardous materials technicians, licensed engineers and emergency medicine physicians, logisticians, paramedics, planners, search-and-rescue specialists, and search-and-rescue dogs with handlers. Structure collapse resulting from earthquake events often creates numerous void spaces in damaged or destroyed buildings where survivors may be trapped. Thus, USAR teams perform life-saving technical activities, including specialized search-and-rescue operations to recover trapped individuals.

On August 14, Prime Minister of Haiti Ariel Henry declared a one-month state of emergency in Haiti and activated GoH Civil Protection General Directorate (DGPC) personnel, mobilizing search-and-rescue brigades to earthquake-affected areas. The GoH has also activated an Emergency Operations Center to coordinate assessment and response activities and plans to deploy GoH Ministry of Health (MoH) staff and Ministry of Public Works heavy equipment to affected sites. As of August 16, the GoH had mobilized rapid response teams in Grand’Anse, Nippes, and Sud to carry out search-and-rescue operations, deliver food assistance and medical supplies, and clear roads and bridges damaged by the earthquake or blocked by resultant landslides.



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Fairfax County Fire and
Rescue Department staff
deployed to assist
UNDAC

LOGISTICS AND HCIMA SUPPORT

USAID/BHA is providing logistics support in heavily-affected communities in Grand’Anse, Nippes, and Sud. In addition, five members of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department are deploying as part of the Americas Support Team (AST) to provide technical support to UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) personnel, assisting with humanitarian coordination, information management, and assessment (HCIMA) efforts. The AST is a module supported through USAID/BHA to establish On-Site Operations Coordination Center facilities and assist with coordination efforts between the UN, local emergency management agencies, and other relief actors, including donor governments and non-governmental organizations.

Meanwhile, USAID has requested the unique capabilities of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) to support USAID’s response efforts with air transport of relief staff and USAR team members within Haiti, as well as assessment efforts in



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Helicopters deployed by the USSOUTHCOM to support of relief operations

earthquake-affected areas. USSOUTHCOM is deploying eight helicopters, including three UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, three CH-47 Chinook helicopters, and two HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters. Additionally, USSOUTHCOM is providing aerial images to support damage assessments.

USAID/BHA is also supporting one UNHAS aircraft, which is available to transport humanitarian staff and commodities within Haiti, as well as a WFP barge service to facilitate additional humanitarian transport between Port-au-Prince and the northern coast of Haiti’s southwestern peninsula.

On August 14, in response to a GoH request for aerial assistance, the Government of the Dominican Republic (GoDR) provided a CASA 212 aircraft and two helicopters to provide logistical support for assessments, transport GoH officials to earthquake-affected areas, and transfer injured individuals in affected areas to Port-au-Prince for treatment.



2,000

Number of hygiene kits distributed by IOM with USAID/BHA support

RELIEF COMMODITIES AND WASH

As of August 16, USAID/BHA partner the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is preparing to distribute 2,000 hygiene kits, 2,000 jerry cans, and 600 shelter repair kits to affected populations in Les Cayes and across Nippes. USAID/BHA funds IOM to maintain pre-positioned emergency relief supplies in Haiti for distribution in response to sudden-onset disasters such as earthquakes and other shocks.

Additionally, UN Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths allocated \$8 million from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund on August 15 to support the provision of relief items and health care services, safe drinking water, shelter items, and WASH assistance to affected households. Furthermore, on August 16, the Government of Chile (GoC) dispatched a flight to Haiti carrying 16 MT of food commodities and medical and WASH supplies. The GoC is also engaging the governments of Costa Rica and Panama to provide air transport for additional commodities.



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USCG helicopters deployed to assist with medical evacuations

HEALTH

On August 15, the USCG deployed two helicopters with medical staff and supplies to Haiti. Alongside supporting USAR and logistics efforts, the helicopters are also transferring critically injured patients from affected areas to Port-au-Prince, as available. Furthermore, the USCG is assessing airports in Jérémie and Les Cayes for use for additional medical evacuations.

The GoH MoH activated an emergency health crisis cell to coordinate information on needs and response efforts with health partners, according to the UN. As of August 16, the GoH had deployed engineers to assess structural damage at health facilities and deployed 15 trucks carrying medical supplies to earthquake-affected areas. In addition, specialized medical personnel deployed with supplies to treat trauma and orthopedic needs among earthquake-affected populations.

The GoDR is delivering medical supplies and non-food items to Haiti by air. In addition, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) country office in Haiti activated an emergency plan, while PAHO and the UN World Health Organization (WHO) declared an emergency for Haiti and neighboring Dominican Republic for the duration of 2021. PAHO and WHO are coordinating with the GoH DGPC, local authorities and health officials, and other UN agencies. Furthermore, the Red Cross and hospitals in unaffected areas are providing surge assistance, while Médecins Sans Frontières is preparing to receive patients at Port-au-Prince's Tabarre Hospital and has deployed a team to Jérémie.



50,000

People supported through prepositioned USAID/BHA shelter commodities

SHELTER

The DART is coordinating with relief actors in Haiti to facilitate the distribution of shelter commodities prepositioned in Haiti, including blankets, hygiene kits, kitchen kits, and shelter repair kits to support nearly 50,000 people. USAID/BHA also activated a shelter advisor to support the provision of shelter assistance. Furthermore, Church World Service is conducting damage assessments of houses and schools constructed through its programs in recent years to determine levels of shelter need.



3,020

People receiving hot meals from WFP with USAID/BHA food commodities

FOOD SECURITY

On August 16, USAID/BHA released 10 MT of food—including beans, rice, and vegetable oil—from its contingency stock managed by WFP to distribute hot meals to more than 3,000 people at hospitals in Jérémie and Les Cayes. In the meantime, WFP is procuring 3 MT of ready-to-eat meals to support the hospitals until the UN agency is able to distribute hot meals. WFP will continue to provide food at hospitals in affected areas as the UN agency's primary food response; as of August 16, WFP had not identified other major food needs resulting from the earthquake.

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. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- 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, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)