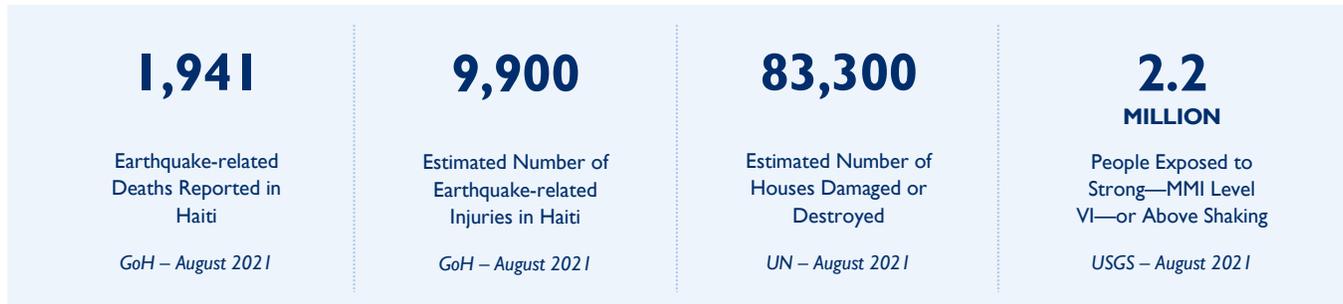


# Haiti – Earthquake

AUGUST 18, 2021

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- The August 14 earthquake results in at least 1,941 deaths and 9,900 injuries as of August 17, according to the GoH.
- DART USAR personnel and disaster experts conduct assessments and engage departmental EOCs in Grand’Anse and Sud.
- Earthquake-affected populations urgently require health assistance in Grand’Anse, Nippes, and Sud, where the earthquake damaged or destroyed at least 24 health facilities.
- Humanitarian convoys—including trucks carrying USAID/BHA-funded assistance—depart Port-au-Prince for Les Cayes.



## 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

### 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

### August 15, 2021

DoD deploys 8 helicopters to support USAID/BHA response efforts

### 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

### August 17, 2021

DART USAR experts conduct assessments in Grand'Anse and Sud

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### Earthquake Death Toll Continues to Increase Amid Acute Humanitarian Needs in Southwestern Haiti

The August 14 earthquake in Haiti had resulted in at least 1,941 deaths and injury to more than 9,900 people as of August 17, according to the Government of Haiti (GoH). Though the majority of the casualties are in Sud Department, where the earthquake resulted in at least 1,597 deaths, Grand'Anse and Nippes department were also acutely impacted; GoH authorities reported at least 205 and 137 deaths in Grand'Anse and Nippes department, respectively, as well as 2 deaths in Nord-Ouest Department.

Based on continued assessments in earthquake-affected areas, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) has identified food assistance, health care, logistics support, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance as priority needs for the humanitarian response. Prior to the earthquake, populations in southwestern Haiti were already experiencing significant food insecurity and had limited access to health and WASH services, and these gaps are likely to increase as a result of the earthquake, according to the UN.

In particular, earthquake-related damage to shelters and subsequent displacement have heightened protection risks for vulnerable households and compounded emergency shelter needs, the UN reports. Local authorities note that displaced households in Sud are currently residing in makeshift shelters, while a non-governmental organization estimates that 1,000 people were in need of temporary shelter in Grand'Anse's Jérémie commune as of August 17. Thus, shelter assistance—such as plastic sheeting and blankets—remains an urgent priority, as does safe drinking water due to damage to or disruption of local WASH systems.

### DART USAR Experts Continue Response Efforts

Urban search-and-rescue (USAR) operations and related structural assessments are continuing across affected areas of southwestern Haiti four days following the earthquake. USAID DART personnel continue to coordinate with national and international response structures in Haiti, including GoH and departmental emergency operations centers (EOCs), to determine potential needs and gaps in the response. In addition, ten DART surge staff continue to provide support to EOCs in Grande'Anse, Nippes, and Sud and conduct damage and needs assessments in affected towns.

On August 17, a DART assessment team comprising six USAR staff returned to Sud's Les Cayes commune to assess the structural integrity of a dam and determine additional needs in the area in coordination with the local EOC. The EOC reports that urgent needs in Les Cayes include hygiene kits, plastic sheeting, and safe drinking water. The DART team estimated that approximately 20 percent of buildings in Les Cayes and Sud's nearby Camp-Perrin commune—where landslides were reported—were damaged.

The DART continues to engage the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to determine potential impacts of the landslides near Camp-Perrin. Meanwhile, a second DART team—including five USAR staff and one disaster expert—conducted an aerial assessment of earthquake damage in Grand’Anse’s Pestel commune, reporting that roads in the area were largely impassable—reportedly disrupting routine trucking services for safe drinking water—and that structures in remote areas surrounding Jérémie were significantly damaged by the earthquake. In Jérémie, the team also engaged the departmental EOC, which reports that food, medical supplies, safe drinking water, and shelter are urgent needs in the area.

### **Earthquake Damages or Destroys at Least 24 Health Care Facilities, as Health Actors Scale Up Relief Operations**

In addition to generating and exacerbating health needs in Haiti, the August 14 earthquake reportedly damaged or destroyed at least 24 health facilities across affected departments, further reducing access to health care services for earthquake-affected populations, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and UN. In Sud, the earthquake damaged 14 health care facilities, while five facilities were damaged or destroyed in both Grand’Anse and Nippes. During assessment missions on August 17, DART members observed that, while hospitals in Les Cayes were operational, the facilities were functioning on generator power and maintained only limited fuel supplies. In addition, structural damage had rendered two of five operating rooms in the commune nonfunctional. In Jérémie, DART assessment missions on August 17 indicated that all five of the commune’s health care facilities lacked sufficient fuel, medical supplies, and personnel. The Jérémie EOC also reported that individuals from rural areas continued to arrive in the commune seeking medical treatment. Prior to the earthquake, an estimated 3 million people in Haiti required critical health assistance countrywide, according to the UN.

Despite access constraints, health actors continue to conduct life-saving health care services in southwestern Haiti. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has mobilized medical teams and provided medical commodities and other essentials items to bolster operations in Les Cayes, Jérémie, Nippes’s Miragoane commune, and Sud’s Port-Salut commune. Meanwhile, PAHO has deployed three rapid response teams to Sud to conduct initial assessments in coordination with the GoH Ministry of Health (MoH) and establish centralized reporting systems for relief actors. In addition, The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) delivered medical commodities to three hospitals in Les Cayes sufficient to treat 30,000 individuals.

### **Humanitarian Convoys Depart Port-au-Prince for Les Cayes Despite Security and Infrastructure Challenges**

Transportation and logistics challenges continue to impede the delivery of humanitarian aid, relief actors report. Due to organized criminal group (OCG) presence along land routes linking Haiti’s capital city of Port-au-Prince with earthquake-affected areas, humanitarian actors have largely relied on air and sea transportation, limiting the frequency and volume of aid deliveries. Despite these impediments and earthquake-related infrastructure damage, relief convoys began arriving in Jérémie and Les Cayes towns on August 17, according to the UN. On August 17, as part of a larger humanitarian convoy, three trucks carrying USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)-funded food and relief commodities—including blankets and hygiene items—and one UN World Food Program (WFP) truck carrying 4.2 metric tons (MT) of USAID/BHA-funded food for hospital hot meals departed Port-au-Prince for Les Cayes. The convoy traveled with police escort due to security risks along the route, which passes through areas with OCG presence, though WFP had previously negotiated a one-week humanitarian corridor with OCG leaders. In addition, USAID/BHA-supported WFP barge activities facilitated the transportation of three deliveries of relief commodities and personnel on August 16 from Port-au-Prince to locations in Grand’Anse and Nippes.

## 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 U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) helicopters deployed to Haiti began transporting DART assessment teams—including USAR staff—to Les Cayes on August 16 to commence assessment and response activities. Sites reached or assessed by DART USAR experts included Les Cayes, Jérémie, and Pestel as of August 17; USAR activities in affected areas are ongoing. 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 EOC to coordinate assessment and response activities. 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.



5

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 have deployed 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.



8

Helicopters deployed by the USSOUTHCOM to support of relief operations

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 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 a WFP barge service to facilitate additional humanitarian transport between Port-au-Prince and the northern coast of Haiti’s southwestern peninsula. Separately, the UN Humanitarian Air Service has an aircraft available to assist with response efforts.

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

On August 17, USAID/BHA partner the International Organization for Migration (IOM) distributed 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. The European Commission’s Department for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and the Government of the Republic of Korea have also

announced nearly \$3.5 and \$1 million in emergency funding, respectively, to meet immediate needs. 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.



**2**

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. As of August 17, the USCG had flown 72 sorties, saved 67 people, and assisted 89 people, while transporting 143 medical and USAR staff—including members of the DART—and 5,500 pounds of medical supplies to affected areas.

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 PAHO country office in Haiti has activated its 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. In addition, the GoDR is delivering medical supplies and non-food items to Haiti by air. Meanwhile, the Red Cross and hospitals in unaffected areas are providing surge assistance, while MSF is preparing to receive patients at Port-au-Prince's Tabarre Hospital and has deployed a teams to Les Cayes, Jérémie, and Port-Salut.



**50,000**

People supported through  
prepositioned USAID/BHA  
shelter commodities

## SHELTER

The DART is coordinating with relief actors 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.

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## 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](http://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](http://cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](http://reliefweb.int).

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