

Information Bulletin

Americas: Hurricane Maria

Information Bulletin no. 1	Date of issue: 21 September 2017
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Red Cross Movement actors currently involved in the operation: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), American Red Cross, Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross, British Red Cross overseas branches, Bahamas Red Cross Society, Canadian Red Cross Society, Cuban Red Cross, Dominican Red Cross Society, French Red Cross-PIRAC (Regional Intervention Platform for the Americas and the Caribbean), Haiti Red Cross Society, Italian Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross overseas branches, Norwegian Red Cross, Saint Kitts and Nevis Red Cross Society, Spanish Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).	
N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation: Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), United Nations system agencies (United National Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], World Food Programme [WFP], Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UN-OCHA], International Organization for Migration [IOM]), Directorate General (DG)- European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), Pan American Health Organization [PAHO], World Health Organization (WHO), government of affected countries, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/ Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), among others.	

This bulletin is being issued for information only; it reflects the current situation and details available at this time.

The Situation

Hurricane Maria's large eye was 105 miles (175 KM) east-northeast of Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic and 155 miles (255 KM) south-east of Turks and Caicos' Grand Turk Island, near latitude 20.2 North, longitude 69.1 West at 1100 AM Atlantic Standard Time (AST) (1500 Coordinated Universal Time [UTC]). Maria is moving toward the north-west at around 9 mph (15 km/h), and this general motion is expected to continue through tonight. A turn toward the north-northwest is forecast early Friday, 22 September 2017, with that motion continuing through early Saturday, 23 September 2017. On the forecast track, Maria's eye will continue to pass offshore of the Dominican Republic's northern coast today, 21 September 2017 and then move near or just east of the Turks and Caicos Islands and south-eastern Bahamas tonight and on Friday. Maximum sustained winds remain near 115 mph (185 km/h), with higher gusts; Maria is a category 3 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale, and some strengthening is possible in the next day or so¹.



Hurricane Maria's path and predicted trajectory as of 11 am on 21 September 2017. Source: NOAA

¹ Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: National Hurricane Centre. 11 AM AST Advisory, 21 September 2017.
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/index.php>



Dominica

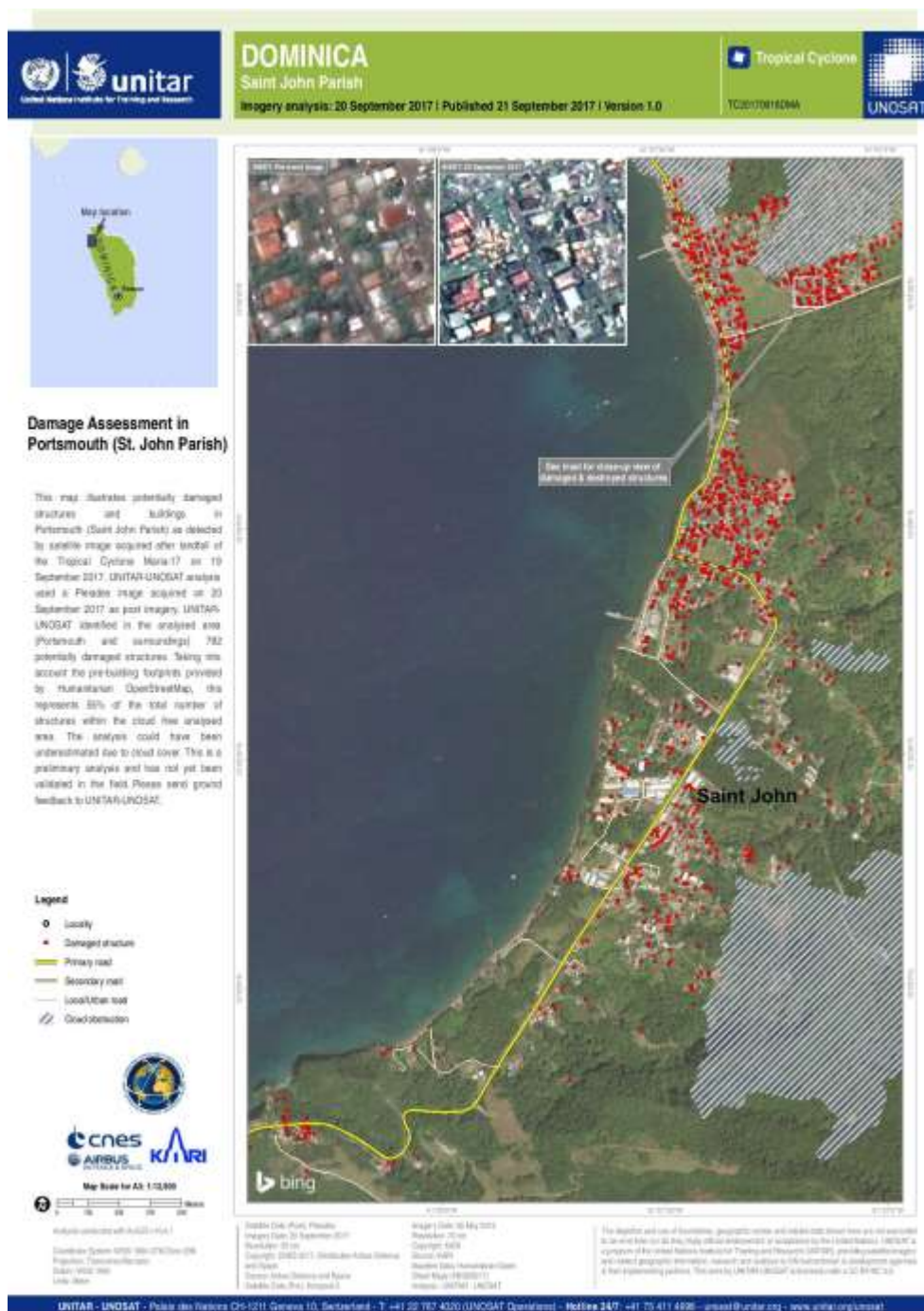
The **Dominica Red Cross Society** had been actively responding to the aftermath from Hurricane Irma by mobilizing emergency supplies for its response from Saint Martin; now that Hurricane Maria has severely impacted Dominica, it will respond to the immediate needs of those affected with activities such as the distribution of relief supplies and the provision of first aid².

Damage and needs	Comments
<p>Initial damage assessments indicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of country impacted • 56,890 persons affected • Significant damage to housing stock • Capital city Roseau is flooded • Roseau hospital damaged • Canefield airport covered with alluvium • Melville Hall airport intact <p>Immediate Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,000 Tarpaulins • Water 4,813 cases per day (24 (0.5l) bottles • Clearing of roadways • Reconstruction of bridges • Reestablishment of communication networks³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDEMA prepared a shipment of 250 family packages of relief supplies (water and non-perishable food items). Which were transported by the Barbados Coast Guard to Dominica; the supplies arrived in Dominica on 20 September 2017 • Aerial reconnaissance conducted on 19 September 2017 by the Regional Security System (RSS) C26 Air wing • 1 Search and Rescue (SAR) Team of 6 people was deployed to Dominica on 19 September 2017. Other SAR teams confirmed for deployment from Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago. • The Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) was deployed on 20 September 2017. • The CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU), the CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) team, CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST) are all on standby. • Monitoring Amateur Radio communications to capture information from the Amateur Radio Association in Dominica continues. • The 11th meeting of the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) Partners was convened on 19 September 2017 at the CDEMA Coordinating Unit, with 29 members from regional and international institutions to discuss response and relief efforts in Dominica. • UNDP deployed a support team to Dominica to support the relief efforts; other teams are on standby to provide assistance if required. • UNICEF surge capacity to be deployed (some already deployed); essential relief commodities will be sent with colleagues from WHO and other partners • PAHO deploying humanitarian advisers; exploratory discussions being advanced with the Chinese Embassy to conduct initial assessment since they constructed the hospital in Dominica • WFP: Fixed wing aircraft in Trinidad and Antigua are being remobilized to Dominica, helicopter asset being deployed to Dominica and telecoms in Antigua sending VSAT links for deployment to Dominica • Caribbean Development Bank (CDB): Emergency Response Grant (ERG) available to Dominica; exploring options for direct support to CDEMA to support the logistical operations in Dominica⁴

² Source: American Red Cross: Disaster Response #1- Caribbean: Hurricane Maria

³ Source: Hurricane Maria Situation Report #1. CDEMA. 20 September 2017 at 9 PM AST

⁴ IBID.



United States of America and its territories

American Red Cross:

- Puerto Rico: 175 collective centres are open with a total population of 10,692 people
- United States Virgin Islands (USVI): 8 collective centres are open with a total population of 1,353 people⁵
- The American Red Cross is deploying three disaster response specialists to Dominica as part of an international response to support the Dominica Red Cross; they will set up information technology (IT)-telecoms systems for the response, provide information management support for assessments and coordination, and help develop a plan for potential cash grant distributions when possible.

⁵ Source: American Red Cross: Disaster Operations & Logistics Operational Update Summary, Thursday, 21 September 2017

- In both Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Red Cross volunteers are working in close collaboration with local officials and community partners to coordinate response efforts⁶.

Puerto Rico

Damage and needs	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 death has been reported • The Puerto Rico State Agency for Emergency and Disaster Management reported that 100% of Electric Energy Authority customers were without power as of Wednesday, 20 September 2017; could take several months to repair damage. • The Aqueduct and Sewer Authority is reporting that portable water has been affected, but the extent of the damage is unknown due to communications system outages • River levels were approaching or exceeding record levels across Puerto Rico, according to data from the U.S. Geological Survey⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governor of Puerto Rico issued a curfew that began last night, 20 September 2017 at 6pm Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) • The National Guard will assist once the conditions are suitable for helicopter operations • The US president declared a major disaster in the U.S. Virgin Islands on Thursday, 21 September 2017⁸.

U.S. Virgin Islands

Damage and needs	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early reports indicate that between 65-70% of the buildings on St. Croix have been damaged; St. Croix houses about half of USVI's population. 	

IFRC actions

- The IFRC developed an emergency appeal for 1,600,000 Swiss francs (CHF) to assist 1,000 families (5,000 people) for 12 months
- The IFRC's Communications Unit issued a press Release about the Dominica Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT) team and the IFRC's emergency appeal
- The IFRC's Communications Unit updated Hurricane Maria talking points and is disseminating social media content on the storm
- The IFRC is in continuous contact with the National Societies in the hurricane's path
- The IFRC's regional office for the Americas (ARO) is monitoring the storm's progress from its emergency operations centre (EOC)
- A 12-person Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT) has been deployed to Dominica to help assess the damage and coordinate the relief operations.
- Developed a [Dashboard](#) for Hurricane Maria
- Holding daily Joint Task Force (JTF) meetings with headquarters in Geneva

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the Caribbean:

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⁶ Source: "Red Cross Responds to Hurricane Maria, Mexican Earthquake". American Red Cross. <http://www.redcross.org/news/article/Red-Cross-Responds-to-Hurricane-Maria-Mexican-Earthquake>

⁷ IBID.

⁸ IBID.

In Geneva:

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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by *Strategy 2020* which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

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