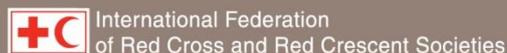


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Information bulletin

Haiti: Civil Unrest



Information Bulletin N° 1	Date of issue: February 17, 2019
Date of disaster: Ongoing since July 6 2018	Point of contact: Raphael HAMOIR, Operations Manager, raphael.hamoir@ifrc.org
N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation (if available and relevant): Red Cross Movement actors currently involved in the operation: The Haitian Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), and Partner National Societies (PNSs) such as American Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross Society, German Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, French Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross and Netherlands Red Cross.	

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

The situation

Since January 2019 large protests has taken place in the capital and other cities of Haiti leaving people dead and several injured.

The large socio-economic crisis and the devaluation of the local currency against the US dollar and the resulting increase in prices have fuelled public discontent. These social protests involved in some cases a high degree of violence, including attacks to public buildings and private companies, burning of gas stations and banks and people injured and killed. Police are deployed to in key locations to try to control the situation. Some supermarkets are still open for a few hours per day but there are big concerns about the evolution of the situation, all schools and universities are closed. Many key streets of the capital and other cities have been blocked. This has an impact in terms of access by the population to basic services and goods. The situation is expected to continue the upcoming days.

The violent demonstrations began in October 2018 and have put the country in a situation of uncertainty on a daily basis. Following the call of the opposition to protest on Thursday 7 February (symbolic date-reversal of the Duvalier and beginning of the presidency's term), and to block the country since February 6, in order to protest against the high cost of living.

The current socio-economic crisis hitting Haiti should be read in the light of events which deeply affected the country in the past years and months. Struggling to recover from a devastating earthquake in 2010, Haiti has been repeatedly impacted by disastrous event leaving the population in a state of constant recovery:

- A cholera outbreak from 2010 to 2017;
- Hurricane Matthew in 2016 which left 1.2 million people affected and much needs hardly covered.
- In July 2018 major protests erupted as the prime minister announced increase in gasoline prices, with demonstrations using burning tires and barricades to block major streets across Port-au-Prince and in the city of Cap-Haitien.
- In October an earthquake impacted the North of the country and left over 2000 houses destroyed and 16 000 damaged. Needs of the affected population were hardly met.

The Haitian Red Cross with support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has been responding to each of these events with several Emergency Appeals launched over the years.

Stress has been constant on a population now seeing their livelihood threatened by years of political instability, a weak Gourde, expensive food and cost of living and lingering drought which mainly affects North of the country.

The exit of UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSTAH) in 2017 which was acting as a key public security actor since 2004 has left a void that the authorities have struggling to fill with National Police capacities. The MINUSJUSHT mission doesn't quite count with as much as peacekeeping capacities has did its predecessor.

February 5th

The government declared a state of economic emergency at an extraordinary Council of Ministers broadcast live on television to fight against famine and expensive cost of life. The declaration considers the following actions:

- Eleven (11) steps to reduce the state's life-course which are very similar to the ones previously stated by the government Moses;
- Subsidizes for 8 products identified in the basic food basket in order but there is no mention of the type of products and how this action will be implemented;
- Reinforcement of certain social measures such as the increase in community restaurants;
- Meals subsidies for workers in the national society of industrial parks (SONAPI) zone so that they pay 40 HTG instead of 80 HTG for a meal and the possibility for them to receive basic food items;
- Agricultural Programmes with purchases of seeds and fertilizers for farmers 'associations with a preference for short cycle products.

February 6th

- Several blockades and barricades registered in the metropolitan area (Tabarre, Delmas 33-Gerald battle-Croix of the Missions-Bas of the city) and in some provinces (Petit Goave-allet; Route Mirebalais-Lascahobas, Aquin, Les Cayes). with intervention of the Police to stop it quickly.
- No information on the Gonaïves area.
- Heavy traffic jams were reported specially for people trying to return to high Delmas and Pétionville at the end of the day.
- At the bottom of the Port au Prince and in the Bicentennial area, fire barricades and gunfire were reported since the afternoon.
- A fuel boat was supposed to be unloaded and delivered, but many stations are still dry or in ration.
- A meeting of the Aid Effectiveness Committee took place, chaired by the Prime Minister with the presence of all the ambassadors.

February 7th

- Numerous demonstrations were recorded throughout the day around the points of access of Pétionville, including Delmas, the Pan-American, Lalue, Pilgrim/Thomassin, Frères.
- In the areas close to Martissant (Chancerelles/portal Saint Joseph-bicentennial) Shots were reported throughout the day, however, it has been difficult to access to related information. In the province of Mirebalais: the death of a young woman worsened the demonstrations.
- In Cap Haïtien, Jérémie, Jacmel, Gonaïves, les Cayes: A lot of tension was reported in the streets and a high number of protesters.
- The demonstration was scattered in champ of Mars, initially it was aimed to finish in front of the National Palace.

Over the weekend of **February 9**, the situation remained tense with reported roads blocked and increased violence during protests as the crowd looted and started fires on several places. The manifestations have been taking place in Port-au-Prince and in other main cities of the country.

February 11th

After 5 consecutive days, all the activities are paralysed in Port au Prince and most part of the cities in the provinces. Schools, commercial banks, commerce in general and even the embassies keep their doors closed. Spontaneous manifestation has been signalled in the evening of Sunday at Miragoane and barricades reported in Jeremie in Grand 'Anse.

February 12th

Street demonstrations are reported everywhere in Port-au-Prince and in provincial cities. According to local people, demonstrators, several thousand of whom are on their way to the airport, plan to go to Pétion-Ville. In Carrefour and Delmas, mobilizations are also reported.

The Association of Private Hospitals of Haiti (AHPH) is very concerned about the "rapid" deterioration of the country's socio-economic and political situation. Hospitals, the association points out, are beginning to face major challenges: electricity shortage, fuel shortage, oxygen shortage, depletion of drug stocks and shutdown of transport and communication facilities.

February 13th

Large movements of people continue in the streets. Blockages have been reported in Mais Gate, Delmas 95 and the area from Mariani to Bizoton.



Source: Incidents reported in different cities from the country

Population movement

It is important to mention the migration flow between Haiti and the Dominican Republic is a recurrent and sensitive topic. Over the last years, the Haitian Red Cross and Dominican Republic Red Cross have responded by attending the needs of the migrants looking for a better life in Dominican Republic or the returnees deported following decision of the Dominican Republic constitutional court of September 23, 2013.

An increase of migration flows between the two countries remain is given a high probability if the current socio-economic situation is to continue. On February 12, 2019 several reports mentioned tension at the

border in Malpasse; the Dominican Red Cross is also advising they have been supporting Haitian migrants in Dajabon who have been able to pass the border on the same day. The situation should remain under close surveillance by both national societies.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Haitian Red Cross actions

The Haitian Red Cross, following its humanitarian mission, started a coordination process with its Movement partners on February 7, 2019 to provide relief and assistance to individuals and families who may be affected by this situation. At the beginning of February 7, 2019, the Haitian Red Cross set up a response structure with ambulances and volunteers to provide pre-hospital care. Because of its acceptance and recognition in the country, the Haitian Red Cross was able to move easily to help the victims. From February 7 to 10, 2019, the Haitian Red Cross provided attention to 11 people (4 gunshots, 4 traffic accidents, and 3 with a abdominal pain)

The Haitian Red Cross, with the support of the German Red Cross, continues implementing a project at the border to attend the repatriation of Haitian citizens from the Dominican Republic.

On Monday February 11, a coordination meeting was held with the Dominican Red Cross to increase awareness about the current situation in Haiti and the repercussions it could have in the country.

The Dominican Red Cross continues monitoring the situation and is ready to support any relocation or response operation in Haiti with appropriate means. In addition, the Dominican Red Cross has offered support to facilitate coordination with the country's government authorities.

IFRC actions:

- Security meeting organized with Haitian Red Cross and Partner National Societies in country
- Coordination with the Haitian Red Cross
- Coordination with ICRC
- Close Monitoring of the situation
- Activation of IFRC contingency plan:
 - IFRC staff in Haiti remaining on stand-by and in contact with security focal point
 - No field trips are allowed at this stage
 - Activation of satellite phones
 - IFRC office remains closed. Reopening of office to be decided upon assessment of the situation
 - Regional Disaster Management coordinator has been deployed to support an coordinate the actions in the field
- Development of an information message
- A DREF has been requested to support Haitian Red Cross actions.
- **SECURITY PHASE RAISED TO ORANGE**

ICRC actions:

- Coordination with HRC and Federation
- Financial support the HRC to promote messages in local radios on respect on the emblem and RC action
- Close monitoring of the situation
- ICRC visit to Haiti being prepared for week 8 and discussions will be held with the National Society, the Federation and PNS to adjust the support to HRC

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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 (NGO's) 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.

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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.