

HAITI: Tropical Storm Melissa

FLASH UPDATE N0.3 – as of 28 October 2025

This report is produced with the support of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in collaboration with humanitarian partners and based on available information.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has now classified Melissa as a Category 5 hurricane as of 27 October.
- On 27 October, the Artibonite and North-West departments were placed under orange alert, and the Artibonite Departmental Emergency Operations Centre (COUD) was activated on 28 October.
- The Nippes department was placed under red alert on 28 October.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) has pre-positioned 452 metric tons of food in the Grand Sud, with an additional 360 tons available from Port-au-Prince—enough to assist around 86,000 people for two weeks.
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) supported the preventive sheltering of 3,000 people in the South and Grand 'Anse, through the activation of 100 shelters and 253 Civil Protection brigadiers.
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has pre-positioned 2,900 water, hygiene and sanitation kits for 14,500 people, and provided nutrition supplies to 176 health facilities covering 4,175 children across the Grand Sud.
- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) pre-positioned sexual and reproductive health kits covering 4,200 births, 180 cases of rape, 525 obstetric surgeries and 240 post-abortion complications, and plans to distribute 4,000 dignity kits in the coming days.



SITUATION OVERVIEW

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has upgraded Melissa to a Category 5 hurricane, the highest level, with extremely strong winds capable of causing major damage. Although the system remains intense, Haiti is under a tropical storm alert, as the hurricane's core is not expected to make direct landfall on the country.

On 25 October, the Government adjusted alert levels: the South and Grand 'Anse departments were placed under red alert, Nippes and the South-East under orange cyclonic alert, and the West under orange alert for heavy rains. The National Emergency Operations Centre remains fully activated.

As of the morning of 27 October, Melissa was located south of Jamaica, moving gradually northward, potentially approaching Haiti in the following hours. The Artibonite and North-West departments are now under orange alert, due to expected worsening weather conditions.

Peripheral rain bands continue to bring heavy rainfall, strong winds and rough seas, mainly over the southern peninsula and parts of the West. The Grand 'Anse department is at high risk of renewed strong winds by Tuesday morning.

According to the Civil Protection Directorate, since the start of the episode, three deaths and 16 injuries have been reported. Nearly 450 houses were flooded and 10 houses damaged, mainly in the North-West. Road access remains cut in Moron (Grand 'Anse), Baie d'Orange and Marigot (South-East), as well as Lascahobas (Centre).

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reports damage to agricultural livelihoods in the South, Grand 'Anse and South-East departments, including the loss of banana, avocado, maize, bean and pigeon pea crops, livestock losses in the South-East, and the destruction of fishing gear. Fishing activities remain suspended.

HUMANITARIANS NEEDS

Partners report urgent needs for emergency shelter, safe drinking water, sanitation, food assistance, agricultural recovery, and protection support for households exposed to floods and landslides.

According to FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture (MARNDP), field assessments are required to guide support, particularly for the rehabilitation of rural infrastructure and the distribution of agricultural and fishing inputs.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Response efforts are focusing on the departments under red and orange alert, namely Grand 'Anse, South, Nippes, South-East and West.

Cash Assistance

The WFP has already provided anticipatory cash assistance to over 47,000 people in high-risk areas, helping families prepare and cope with the storm's impact.

UNICEF has supported around 7,250 vulnerable households with emergency cash assistance to meet essential needs and strengthen family resilience, while supporting the recovery of local markets.

Communication and Community Awareness

UNICEF supported community mobilization in the Grand Sud through 470 U-Reporters, young volunteers spreading awareness messages within their communities. This effort also included six sound trucks deployed across the South, South-East, Grand 'Anse and Nippes, and 19 community radios, which broadcasted 22 interactive programs. In total, 2,200 posters were distributed and over 137,000 messages sent via SMS and WhatsApp, in coordination with the Civil Protection Directorate.

UNFPA integrated key prevention and safety messages into its outreach plan, disseminated through the Kay Fanm hotline and safe spaces for women and girls.

In partnership with the Civil Protection Directorate, WFP sent 3.5 million SMS alerts to at-risk populations, sharing anticipatory and safety messages.

Education

UNICEF plans to provide psychosocial support, school kits, and tents to help children resume schooling quickly after the storm.

Food Security

WFP and partners plan to support 155,000 people in the South and Grand 'Anse with immediate assistance, including 15 days of food and, when markets allow, one month of cash transfers. WFP offices in the North and Artibonite remain on high alert for potential emergency activation.

WFP has also secured climate risk financing mechanisms, including potential post-shock insurance payments through the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) and microinsurance for small farmers and social protection programs.

A total of 452 metric tons of food have been pre-positioned in the Grand Sud, with 360 tons ready to be deployed from Port-au-Prince, enough for 86,000 people for two weeks. Additional teams are on standby in the most exposed areas to ensure a rapid response.

The FAO, in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, is assessing available contingency stocks in the Grand Sud and reviewing the redeployment of ongoing activities. About 1,000 emergency food production kits are pre-positioned in Port-au-Prince and may be redirected to the Grand Sud if needed.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual and Reproductive Health

UNFPA pre-positioned emergency reproductive health kits in the West on 25 October, covering 4,200 births, 180 cases of rape, 525 obstetric surgeries, and 240 post-abortion complications. Additional supplies and 32 obstetric and neonatal kits were delivered to 32 health facilities in the South, Grand 'Anse, South-East and Nippes.

The GBV Sub-Cluster, with UNFPA's technical support, is updating the mapping of services to facilitate referral for survivors. This week, 4,000 dignity kits and 600 "mama kits" will be distributed to women and girls, including pregnant and breastfeeding women. Mobile integrated GBV/SRH teams are being deployed with partners such as CDS, FOSREF, World Relief, and Kay Fanm, whose hotline (322) will provide psychosocial support and case management.

Logistics

The Logistics Sector is providing free transport services to partners to support humanitarian operations. Sea transport remains available depending on weather conditions, and cargo flights via UNHAS can be mobilized for hard-to-reach areas. Additional road transport can be organized from Petit-Goâve, Miragoâne and Gonaïves, using WFP trucks or partner transporters as needed.

Nutrition

In the Grand Sud, UNICEF supplied 176 health facilities with nutrition inputs for 4,175 children, across the South (46), Grand 'Anse (42), Nippes (37) and South-East (51). A coordination meeting was held with the four departmental health directorates. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Health (MSPP) and UNICEF, the Nutrition Cluster began mapping nutritional inputs across these departments on 22 October, identifying 46 vulnerable facilities and seven partners to support implementation.

Shelter and Non-Food Items

Since the beginning of the episode, 200 Civil Protection brigadiers have received financial support from IOM to activate around 100 evacuation shelters across the Grand Sud. Another 53 brigadiers have been supported to activate the four departmental COUDs in Nippes, South, South-East and Grand 'Anse. This support has helped meet initial shelter needs, including food and hygiene supplies.

About 3,000 people were preventively sheltered in the South and Grand 'Anse over the weekend, some of whom have already returned home. The Shelter/NFI partners have pre-positioned around 4,000 NFI kits and 5,500 light shelter kits in the Grand Sud and are also mobilizing in Artibonite and the North-West.

In Port-au-Prince, partners continue to install tarpaulins and shelter kits in priority displacement sites, targeting around 15 sites by the end of the week.

The Civil Protection Directorate has identified 20 schools and high schools to serve as temporary shelters for affected families. Nine of these currently host 1,991 people across Les Cayes, Coteaux, Saint Jean du Sud, Île-à-Vache, and Les Cayes, while 117 people have taken refuge in Port-Salut and Île-à-Vache.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

UNICEF has pre-positioned 2,900 WASH kits across the Grand Sud to support rapid response for affected families—800 kits in Les Cayes, 700 in Jérémie, 600 in Jacmel, 400 in Miragoâne, and 400 in Léogâne—reaching approximately 14,500 people.

Coordination

The National Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ICCG), led by OCHA, held a joint meeting on 27 October with the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) and the Anticipatory Action Working Group to prepare partners for potential impacts in the North-East and Artibonite departments.

The Civil Protection Directorate convened the International Community Support Group (GACI) on 27 October to review priority needs and present projections estimating that up to 2.3 million people could be affected.

OCHA has reinforced its sub-office in Les Cayes by deploying additional staff to support coordination and facilitate partner mobilization through local Civil Protection structures. OCHA continues to collect and centralize data on partner capacities and resource availability, helping authorities prioritize actions and optimize the allocation of resources.

Between 26 and 27 October, the South COUD held its first meetings following the activation of the red alert. About 30 participants from government, humanitarian and development sectors attended to review the meteorological situation and plan the response for people in temporary shelters. As of 27 October, 986 families were hosted in 26 shelters out of 60 open across the South.

OCHA is also following up with the Grand'Anse, Nippes and South-East departments, all under red or orange alert. The OCHA sub-office in Artibonite is coordinating with local Civil Protection authorities in Artibonite and North-West through regular situation updates and resource mapping.

The next Flash Update will be released on Thursday, 30 October.

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