

HAITI: Tropical Storm Melissa

FLASH UPDATE N0.1 – as of 23 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

- Tropical Storm Melissa continues to move slowly toward Haiti's southern coast, according to the National Hurricane Center (NHC).
- On 22 October, the Civil Protection Directorate (DGPC) issued an orange alert for the departments of Ouest, Grand 'Anse, Nippes, Sud and Sud-Est.
- Sustained rainfall and strong winds are expected from Thursday evening, with potential flooding, landslides, and power outages in coastal and mountainous areas.
- The CERF Anticipatory Action Framework has been activated. A total of US\$4 million has been allocated to WFP, UNICEF and IOM to enable the launch of early actions aimed at reducing the impact of the shock on vulnerable populations.



SITUATION OVERVIEW

As of 23 October at 9:00 a.m., the United States National Hurricane Center reported that the center of Tropical Storm Melissa was located approximately 485 km southwest of Port-au-Prince. The storm is moving west-northwest at nearly 6 km/h, with tropical-storm-force winds extending up to 185 km from the center. Melissa is expected to strengthen into a major hurricane by the end of the weekend or early next week.

The storm is forecast to bring heavy rainfall to parts of southern Haiti throughout the weekend and into next week, leading to significant and life-threatening flash floods, as well as multiple landslides. Strong winds could also affect the Tiburon Peninsula for a day or more.

On 22 October, the Civil Protection Directorate (DGPC) issued an orange alert for the departments of Ouest, Grand'Anse, Nippes, Sud and Sud-Est, urging the population to remain vigilant due to the risks of heavy rainfall and strong winds. DGPC recommends that the population stay informed through official advisories, avoid high-risk areas (including ravines, riverbanks, coastal zones, flood-prone and landslide-prone areas), refrain from crossing swollen rivers, secure roofs and loose objects, and prepare an emergency kit and shelter plan as needed.

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The expected heavy rainfall could further exacerbate the vulnerability of communities already affected by food insecurity and internal displacement. Humanitarian partners have identified immediate needs for emergency shelter, access to safe drinking water, sanitation, food assistance, and protection measures for households living in areas at high risk of flooding and landslides.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Humanitarian interventions are focusing on the departments placed under orange alert by the Civil Protection Directorate (DGPC) and the Hydrometeorological Unit (UHM), namely Grand'Anse, Sud, Nippes, Sud-Est and Ouest.

Cash Assistance

UNICEF is collaborating with WFP to provide cash assistance to approximately 8,000 vulnerable households in the departments of Sud, Grand'Anse, Nippes and Sud-Est. This joint intervention aims to ensure a coordinated response, avoid duplication, and expand coverage to at-risk families ahead of potential impact. In addition, IOM is working with UNICEF and WFP to provide cash assistance to 3,000 vulnerable households in areas exposed to the storm.

Food Security

Food for the Poor maintains a stock of 20 metric tons of rice in each of its regional warehouses in Jacmel, Anse-à-Veau, Jérémie and Caracol, to support potential food assistance needs in an emergency.

Nutrition

UNICEF has pre-positioned nutritional supplies in the four most exposed departments: Sud, Sud-Est, Nippes and Grand'Anse. Additional stocks are available in more than 100 health facilities across the Sud, Sud-Est and Grand'Anse departments to ensure continuity of essential nutrition services if access becomes disrupted.

Protection

Existing partnerships support vulnerable households across the southern region. UNICEF is working with HEKS-EPER in Grand'Anse, ACCODEP in Sud, and Plan Haiti in Sud-Est. UNICEF's Protection section is also collaborating with AVSI to monitor cash assistance and provide support to vulnerable families.

Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

Awareness messages are currently being disseminated through SMS and automated phone calls, in coordination with UNICEF, IOM, WFP, OCHA and DGPC, notably via the U-Report platform, to inform and prepare communities ahead of the storm. As part of these efforts, IOM is providing targeted support for automated voice messaging in Île-à-Vache, Les Cayes, Port-Salut, Torbeck and Saint-Louis-du-Sud.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

Approximately 150 DGPC volunteers have been mobilized to prepare over 100 temporary evacuation shelters to accommodate people living in high-risk areas, if needed. Preparations include opening, cleaning, minor repairs, installation of essential equipment, and setting up shelter operations.

These shelters are located in the departments of Sud, Grand'Anse, Nippes and Sud-Est, as well as in the Ouest department, particularly in Léogâne, Grand-Goâve and Petit-Goâve. These activities are being carried out jointly by DGPC and IOM as part of the activation of the Anticipatory Action mechanism.

In parallel, IOM is preparing to scale up its response efforts. Essential relief items have been pre-positioned to support affected families. In total, IOM has pre-positioned NFI kits for more than 10,000 households and shelter kits for over 30,000 households across the country. In the Sud department, notably in Camp-Perrin and Jérémie, IOM already has NFI supplies for 3,000 households and shelter kits for 2,500 households.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

UNICEF has pre-positioned 2,900 hygiene kits in the Sud department, covering approximately 14,500 people. Operational coordination is ongoing with IOM, which also has shelter and NFI kits available to ensure a joint and complementary response in the event of impact.

Coordination

Based on NOAA forecasts, the CERF Anticipatory Action Framework for tropical storms and hurricanes in Haiti was triggered: the readiness threshold was activated on 21 October at 11:00 EST, followed by full activation on 22 October at 5:00 EST. The activation aims to reduce the humanitarian impact of this predictable shock by enabling early action, based on forecasting models and risk analysis.

Following the activation of the Anticipatory Action Framework, OCHA mobilized members of the AA group, including UN agencies, the Haitian Red Cross and NGOs, to ensure enhanced coordination of anticipatory actions. In parallel, the Sud inter-sectoral group convened to assess preparedness levels and partner positioning in view of a potential response.

At a strategic level, a DGPC–UN coordination forum has been established to ensure daily monitoring of anticipatory actions and post-impact response. The group held its first meeting on 22 October 2025.

Although the National and Departmental Emergency Operations Centers (COUs) are not yet fully activated, humanitarian actors remain fully mobilized to support civil protection authorities and provide a rapid and coordinated response through existing coordination mechanisms.

In addition, OCHA is supporting DGPC in updating and reinforcing contingency stocks to strengthen national response capacity.

As of 22 October 2025, the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) is only 14.5% funded. The ongoing hurricane season, combined with low emergency stock levels and limited funding, significantly increases the risk of a large-scale humanitarian crisis.

A new Flash Update will be issued later this week.

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