



BUSINESS GUIDE

HAITI EARTHQUAKE

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

AUGUST 2021

Photo: Les Cayes, Sud department, 14 August 2021
Credit: UNDSS

OVERVIEW OF THE CRISIS

At 8:30 am (GMT-4) on 14 August, a strong, shallow earthquake rocked southwestern Haiti just 12 km northeast of Saint-Louis-du-Sud, about 125 kilometres west of the capital Port-au-Prince. The 7.2-magnitude quake, which was 10 km deep, toppled buildings and homes and damaged infrastructure and roads, cutting off access to some roads in the southwest, including the National Road 7 (RN-7) which connects Les Cayes and Jérémie, and forcing many to flee their homes in fear that they may collapse.

While preliminary assessments are still in their very early stages, as of 17 August, the Haitian Civil Protection General Directorate (DGPC) reports more than **60,700 homes** have been **destroyed** and **76,100** have sustained **damages**, leaving thousands homeless, generating pressing need to provide adequate shelter conditions and access to water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as health services. DGPC also reports more than **1,900 dead** (the vast majority in the Department of Sud) and nearly **10,000 injured**, figures likely to continue increasing in the coming hours and days as more people remain missing. While initial aerial reconnaissance missions have shown less catastrophic damage compared to the 2010 earthquake, the devastation wrought by the latest earthquake is yet another blow to communities affected by multiple overlapping crises, generating new humanitarian needs that national systems and international partners will be hard-pressed to meet. Only two days after the earthquake struck, Tropical Depression Grace made landfall in Haiti hampering humanitarian response efforts.

The earthquake could not have come at a worse time for Haiti, which is still reeling from the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse on 7 July and escalating gang violence which has resulted in the internal displacement of around 19,000 people in the country's southern peninsula, greatly worsening an already precarious humanitarian situation, with some 4.4 million in need of humanitarian assistance prior to the earthquake.

While a recent surge in COVID-19 cases has tapered off, the possible displacement of thousands of people has created ripe conditions for a spike in COVID-19 infections, potentially overwhelming an already weak and overstretched health system.

Prime Minister Ariel Henry has declared a one-month national state of emergency, requesting specific assistance in search-and-rescue operations, with all additional requests for support contingent upon the findings of ongoing damage and needs assessments.

HOW THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN HELP

1 MAKE A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

You can contribute to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), a global fund that is one of the fastest and most effective ways to ensure that urgently needed humanitarian assistance reaches people caught up in crises. Contributions are welcome year-round from donors including the private sector. To kickstart relief efforts, the CERF is allocating US\$8 million to provide life-saving assistance in health care, clean water, emergency shelter and sanitation in Haiti. For more information, please visit cerf.un.org/donate.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has issued an Emergency Appeal for Haiti which is available [here](#).

2 MAKE AN IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION OF GOODS OR SERVICES

While an official needs assessment with requests for relief supplies has not been yet published, there is a clear and critical need for medical assistance/health; water, sanitation and hygiene; shelter; and protection. For businesses wishing to contribute to relief efforts by providing in-kind goods or services, please reach out to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) with as much detail as possible, including what you wish to donate and how much, your timeframe for delivery, details on shipping and any other conditions. We will then guide you to the most appropriate recipient organization(s). Companies with employees, suppliers, or customers in the country or region, or those with existing agreements with responding humanitarian organizations should aim to provide support directly to these groups.

Please note that Alliance pour la Gestion des Risques et la Continuité des Activités (AGERCA) is the official Haitian private sector and the civil society focal point at the national emergency operations center (Centre d'opérations d'urgence nationale, COUN) and works directly with the Haitian Civil Protection General Directorate (DGPC). AGERCA is also a Member Network of the Connecting Business initiative (CBI), which was established by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to strategically engage with the private sector before, during, and after an emergency, as well as the national host of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) ARISE platform. AGERCA and its members are currently conducting an analysis of what supplies are available locally to ensure that any contributions are addressing gaps. To follow updates on AGERCA's work in response to the earthquake, see twitter.com/AGERCA1

For more information and help, please contact:

- OCHA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean: **Juliane Gensler**, Associate Humanitarian Affairs Officer/ OCHA Regional Private Sector focal point, juliane.gensler@un.org +50 766733546
- OCHA Emergency Response Section: **Karen Smith**, Private Sector Engagement Advisor, smith3@un.org +41 76 691 1182

3 MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO LONGER-TERM RECOVERY

Recovery/development activities should resume at the onset of the crisis, while humanitarian needs are still being addressed. Longer-term contributions of technical expertise, infrastructure (re-)development and economic investment are key and must be coordinated with national priorities so that risk conditions are not built back. The United Nations encourages donors to support activities that allow the local private sector to "get back in business" as soon as possible. UNDP and partners are currently working with the Government, private sector, and civil society institutions in Haiti. For more information, please contact **Stephanie Ziebell**, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Haiti at stephanie.ziebell@undp.org.

4 MAKE A COMMERCIAL OFFER

If your offer is commercial in nature, please refer to the UN Global Marketplace at www.ungm.org for more information.

CRITICAL REMINDERS

- The UN Secretary-General encourages companies to coordinate their response efforts with the United Nations and the humanitarian coordination system to ensure **coherence with priority needs and to minimize gaps and duplications with the other responders**.
- All response activities should be guided by the humanitarian principles of **humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence**.
- Stakeholder engagement is key to corporate engagement in humanitarian response. Ensuring **communities are at the center** of, and driving humanitarian action, is critical to ensuring appropriate and **timely aid and protection** reaches the people most in need. **Working collaboratively with existing local institutions**, social networks, and civil society is critical in this endeavor.
- Business contributions to UN response efforts must comply with the [Guidelines on Cooperation between the UN and Business Sector](#).
- It is important to ensure that donated items meet [Sphere Standards](#) and reflect priority needs.
- Affected people must be at the centre of any humanitarian response, for their increased engagement and empowerment in decision-making to address their specific needs, and to ensure that international response remains accountable to them. In particular, people in need of humanitarian assistance must **be protected from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)** and have access to channels to report it and have it addressed. Further guidance for the private sector is available. [here](#).
- The **risk of transmitting COVID-19** implies specific access requirements and biosafety measures protocols must be followed.

RECOGNIZING YOUR CONTRIBUTION

OCHA manages the Financial Tracking Service (FTS), which records all reported humanitarian contributions including cash and in-kind donations. Our aim is recording the total amount of funding and resource gaps in humanitarian crises. To give credit and visibility for your generosity please report your contributions to fts@un.org and ocha-ers-ps@un.org.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

For more information on how businesses can help, please contact **Juliane Gensler**, Associate Humanitarian Affairs Officer/OCHA Regional Private Sector focal point, OCHA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean at juliane.gensler@un.org or **Karen Smith**, Private Sector Engagement Advisor, OCHA Emergency Response Section at smith3@un.org

WHERE TO FIND THE LATEST INFORMATION:

- For an updated list of maps, situation reports, and other information please visit humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/haiti and/or reliefweb.int/country/hti.
- For additional resources geared at private sector audiences, please visit the Connecting Business initiative page on the Haiti earthquake at connectingbusiness.org/haiti-earthquake-august-2021.