



Press release

21 November 2012

UK support for countries worst hit by Hurricane Sandy

Humanitarian support for Haiti and Cuba to help save lives and reduce suffering in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy was announced today by Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development.

The support for the two countries, which have been worst affected by the hurricane in the Caribbean, comes following a new appeal from the United Nations. The UK will provide immediate help for two million people in Haiti and emergency shelter and relief to 20,000 people in Cuba.

The aid to Haiti, which will be delivered through the UN, Red Cross Movement and non-governmental organisations, will:

- improve nutrition for 400,000 people including children and breastfeeding mothers;
- deliver sewage removal and hygiene promotion to 850,000 people;
- provide sanitation and cholera prevention to 330,000 people
- restore water supplies, toilets and cleaning facilities; distribute cholera prevention kits; and deliver hygiene promotion campaigns to 17,500 people;
- provide shelter repair kits to 5000 people; and
- provide cash for work to repair roads in remote areas helping 10,000 people.

The assistance for Cuba will help meet urgent needs through the Cuban Red Cross and will support 20,000 people by providing:

- shelter for 7,500 people;
- access to safe water for 5,000 people; and
- essential household items (cooking utensils, blankets, clothing) to 5,000 people.

Justine Greening said:

“Haiti and Cuba were the hardest hit by Sandy outside the US. On top of recent drought and flooding, Haiti is still trying to get back on its feet after the 2010 earthquake. There is a real need for wide-scale humanitarian assistance and the international community must step up.

“Today’s support follows on from the new UN appeal. The UK will provide humanitarian help to meet food, emergency shelter, and water and sanitation needs in both countries. This is about more than just short term help. We are targeting this assistance to make sure Haiti builds long term resilience.”

The team of experts has been sent to Haiti to verify the scale and scope of the immediate humanitarian needs and meet with DFID’s partners in country. They will also explore how DFID can best support people to recover and build resilience helping to stop the cycle of devastation caused by frequent natural disasters.

Notes to editors

1. In Haiti, the UN estimates that 1.5 million people are at risk of severe food insecurity due to the loss of agricultural land, livelihoods and harvests. Thousands of homes have been damaged or destroyed and further displaced people in temporary camps. Hundreds of public buildings and facilities were destroyed, including drinking water supplies, cholera treatment facilities, hospitals and schools. Authorities fear new cholera outbreaks. In addition, roads and bridges were destroyed or badly damaged and river banks collapsed. The worst affected areas are in the South West of the country, also badly hit by the 2010 earthquake. The Government of Haiti declared a state of emergency on 30 October and the UN launched an emergency appeal on 12 November.
2. DFID will provide £7m in humanitarian support to the people of Haiti.
3. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have launched an emergency appeal in support of the Cuban Red Cross after Sandy caused large scale devastation particularly in the city of Santiago, affecting 3 million people. Water and electricity supplies have been damaged and there is significant damage to hospitals and housing. The critical humanitarian needs are shelter, access to food, provision of safe water and sanitation, hygiene, household items and health care.
4. DFID will provide £850,000 of immediate life-saving support for emergency shelter and relief to Cuba.
5. The UN issued an urgent appeal on Monday 12 November calling for more international support for Haiti and Cuba in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Further info can be found here: www.unocha.org/cap/appeals/emergency-revision-2012-consolidated-appeal-haiti-hurricane-sandy.

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