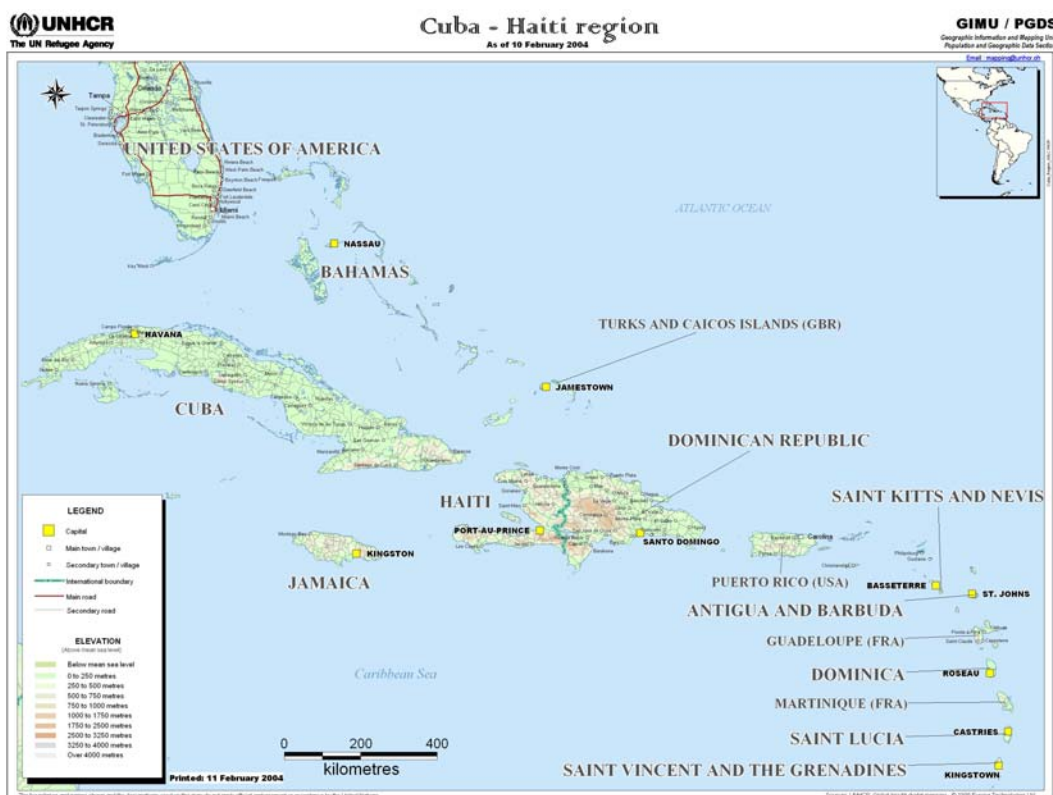


Update on the Haiti Situation

March 2004



Context

Escalating clashes during January between opponents and supporters of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide turned into an armed uprising in early February 2004, and resulted in the departure of Aristide and the deployment of an international force to Haiti. To date, this has claimed the lives of more than 70 people and wounded many more.

UNHCR has been increasingly concerned towards the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas. The Office's intervention is aimed at supporting governments in the Caribbean who receive Haitians fleeing from their country, providing them with temporary protection. UNHCR has called upon all governments in the region to receive those Haitians who have been forced to flee, and provide them with the basic minimum needs, until the situation has stabilised and/or a durable solution is found.

The Office has carried out a first assessment of needs in Cuba and Jamaica, which include providing food, relief items, counselling, health services, latrines, refurbishing existing reception facilities, and providing access to a clean water supply on both islands for an initial period of three months.

Main Objectives

- Ensure the international protection (including access to asylum, unhindered access to persons of concern, screening, registration, and *non refoulement*) of Haitians, and provide humanitarian assistance to them.
- Ensure that the special needs of refugee women, children and other vulnerable groups are met.
- Create a favourable environment for the reception, protection and assistance of refugees through the implementation of awareness campaigns.

UNHCR Beneficiaries by status (at March 2004)

The political crisis, widespread unrest and violence in Haiti have caused displacement within the borders, and a small number of Haitians have arrived mainly in Cuba and Jamaica. The arrivals total no more than 200 persons.

Coordination

Cuba

In Cuba, the *Gobierno de la Provincia de Guantánamo* will be UNHCR's national partner.

Jamaica

In Jamaica, the Ministry of National Security will act as the umbrella organisation to coordinate the work of participating agencies: Ministries of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Health, Salvation Army, Jamaican Red Cross, Food for the Poor and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA).

UNDP will contribute to cover coordination costs and will provide technical support to government bodies.

UNICEF will provide support in recreational activities, as well as make education materials on health available in Creole.

Humanitarian Assistance Activities

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In Jamaica, UNHCR will strengthen the organisational and protection capacity of UNHCR's non-governmental partners by providing assistance to refugees and asylum seekers. Institutional capacities and response for protection and assistance of asylum seekers will be enhanced. Efforts will be increased to create a favourable environment for the reception of refugees through the provision of documentation and registration supplies to the Migration Department.

FOOD

As a result of the instability and the increasing violence in Haiti, there are a small number of Haitians fleeing to other islands in the Caribbean. Many of them reach Cuba and Jamaica without sufficient means to cover their basic necessities. UNHCR will make efforts to meet the nutritional standards of the new arrivals and refugees.

In Cuba, UNHCR, in partnership with the Cuban Red Cross and implementing partners, will provide cooked meals to the new arrivals in reception centres. Extra food rations will be distributed to pregnant and lactating women, as well as to children under 1 year of age. In order to ensure the timely and efficient

distribution of food packages, implementing partner staff will be trained on the storage and distribution of food rations.

SHELTER/OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

In Cuba and Jamaica, urgent repairs are needed to rehabilitate the reception facilities for the new arrivals.

In Cuba, the shelter at Punta Maisi will provide accommodation to the new arrivals. Urgent repairs are needed in respect of roofing, windows, doors and floor. In Jamaica, authorities will accommodate arrivals in 3 shelter facilities which will need to be rehabilitated to provide proper sanitation and cooking facilities, access to a clean water supply, and space to accommodate staff. Basic domestic items (blankets, mattresses, plates, forks, bed sheets, collective cooking stoves, towels, cleaning agents, communal kitchen sets, soap, hygienic paper and sanitary materials) will be provided to all new arrivals. Funding will also be needed to cover the costs for electricity and gas for cooking.

WATER

In Cuba, urgent repairs are needed for the water distribution system in the shelters, as well as on the island.

UNHCR will provide clean water in the reception areas, shelters and health centres. The water truck in Cuba will be repaired and 10 water tanks will be needed for Jamaica, including the costs to supply the water.

DOMESTIC NEEDS/HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT

Most Haitians arrive in Cuba and Jamaica without shelter, household items and means of survival. In Cuba and the rest of the islands, there are no relief items available for emergency situations. At present UNHCR and the Government are relying on the hurricane-relief stocks available, until there is a procurement of the basic items (mats, sheets, blankets, toiletries, sanitary materials, etc) needed.

UNHCR will provide blankets, mattresses, plates, forks, bed sheets, collective cooking stoves, towels, cleaning agents, communal kitchen sets, soap, hygienic paper and sanitary materials to the newly arrived.

HEALTH

National hospitals in Cuba and Jamaica often lack medical equipment, drugs and supplies, as well as the capacity to provide adequate attention to all patients. In addition, the majority of the population of concern to UNHCR does not possess financial resources to access costly medical attention or medicines, leaving them in need of health care support.

In Cuba, there is the need to repair the existing health centre, so that it can become functional again. In Cuba and in Jamaica, UNHCR and its partners will provide primary medical attention and medicines to all Haitians requiring health care assistance. Cases requiring secondary and tertiary health care will be diagnosed at an early stage and referred to the proper health facilities.

SANITATION

The latrines at the reception centres in Cuba and Jamaica are unusable. Provision was not made for waste disposal, and there are no separate latrines for women.

UNHCR will repair the existing 18 latrines in Cuba and construct 4 latrines for women. In Jamaica, the Office will provide 6 blocks of 4 pit latrines, of which some will be for women and children. An incinerator will be installed and garbage bins will be placed at the reception centres in order to maintain the centres clean, which will also reduce the transmission of diseases by flies and rodents.

EDUCATION

In order to ensure that children still have access to basic education while in the reception centres, UNHCR will make available a classroom facility for children of school age.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT (TO AGENCIES)

In Jamaica, staff will be needed to manage the reception centres (one site manager, one administrative/finance officer, five kitchen personnel and six field assistants), as well as funds will be needed to cover administrative supplies and communication costs. In both Cuba and Jamaica, funds will be needed for vehicle fuel, maintenance and repairs of vehicles.

Financial Needs*

Cuba

Sectors	Budget (USD)
Food	8,100
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	89,274
Water	18,880
Domestic Needs/Household Support	2,708
Health	10,000
Sanitation	3,565
Education	1,680
Operational Support (to Agencies)	2,240
TOTAL	136,447

Jamaica

Sectors	Budget (USD)
International Protection	3,000
Food	40,500
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	52,550
Water	5,000
Domestic Needs/Household Support	8,100
Health	8,200
Sanitation	5,250
Operational Support (to Agencies)	32,450
TOTAL	155,050

Haiti Situation

Sectors	Budget (USD)
Programme Support	78,503

Sectors	Budget (USD)
Multi-sectoral Humanitarian Assistance in Cuba and Jamaica	291,497
Programme Support	78,503
Grand Total	370,000

To carry out the above-mentioned activities, an allocation of USD 370,000 was made from the Annual Programme Budget (Operational Reserve). This budget is for an initial period of 3 months. A new assessment of needs may be necessary depending upon developments in the region.