

Scaling up Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Humanitarian Action

Haiti Snapshot 2021

This Snapshot has been prepared by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), in collaboration with OCHA, as part of pilot testing of the Checklist on Scaling up DRR in Humanitarian Action, in November 2020 – March 2021.

1. Situational Analysis

The humanitarian situation in Haiti comes mainly from a structural socio-political and economic crisis that has lasted for more than 4 decades. The persistence of this situation in Haiti, worsened on a recurring basis by acute humanitarian crises caused by sudden natural hazards (cyclone, flood,

earthquake, etc.) and slow onset ones (drought) as well as epidemics (cholera, COVID-19), increases continuously the humanitarian burden.

In 2020, several events imprinted the humanitarian situation in the country. At the socio-political level, there have been violent popular demonstrations against corruption, the absence of a functioning legislature, repeated strikes at the level of the judiciary. Regarding the health situation, COVID-19 caused nearly 250 deaths and around 10,000 confirmed cases. This pandemic also had an impact on household income and their access to food and basic services. The passage of tropical storm Laura, in August

2020, caused infrastructural damage (houses, roads) and affected agriculture in the southern departments of the country.

In 2021, about 40% of the Haitian population, that is 4.4 million people will need humanitarian assistance with around 1.2 million of them with a degree of catastrophic severity. Most of these people who will need humanitarian assistance are from vulnerable groups (including children, vulnerable women, people living in remote areas, persons with disabilities, older persons and displaced people).



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2. Progress & Gaps Review in Scaling up DRR in Humanitarian Action in Haiti

a. Progress/opportunities

- Large multi-sector and multi-actor collaboration observed, and strong engagement of DRR actors including Directorate General of Civil Protection (DGPC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with DRR expertise;
- Strong DRR capacity among Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) members and partners
- Diversified risk data sources
- Large scope of risks considered in Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)
- HNO risk analysis is clearly linked to intersectoral response

b. Gaps/barriers

- Perception of DRR and the Checklist as an additional requirement which is not mandatory in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) process, and not prioritized within limited capacity and resources

- Lack of a common work plan for the integration of DRR into humanitarian actions on an ongoing basis
- Limited capacity of development actors to ensure sustainability of DRR interventions in the longer term
- Lack of strong coordination between humanitarian and development partners, donors and governmental institution on DRR
- The DGPC is considered a single entry point for DRR by many partners in Haiti, whereas the risk and disaster reduction strategy should be anchored within individual ministries

3. Specific recommendations on how DRR could be further scaled up in humanitarian action in Haiti

- Dedicate a qualified field staff to support the process in the specific context of Haiti from the beginning of the HPC.
- Advocate for fundraising specifically allocated to promote DRR into humanitarian actions and to promote the nexus;

- Set up a mechanism for evaluating the integration of DRR into the HNO that can be used to engage government, donors, UN agencies, NGOs and other actors involved
- Include performance indicators on DRR activities into the HRP monitoring framework, so that success could be evaluated afterwards;
- DRR Checklist directly mainstreamed into the HPC guidance and tools;
- Development of field application tools on how to integrate DRR in sector and intersectoral humanitarian activities;
- Strengthened humanitarian-peace-development collaboration, risk analysis and joint work planning, to address the underlying factors of vulnerability;
- Strengthened collaboration with the private sector on integration of DRR in humanitarian action

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AT A GLANCE: DRR & Risk in the Haiti 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)

Is the HNO risk-informed?

Data from different sources were used, including the “World Development Indicators Databank”, the “World Health Organization (WHO) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard”, the “Haiti | DTM - Displacement Tracking Matrix” from International Organization for Migration (IOM), the “Integrated Food security Phase Classification” from the World Food Programme (WFP), implemented in Haiti in coordination with the National Coordination for Food Security (CNSA). There has been involvement and contribution of different actors in risk analysis, including state agencies, as a lead of the thematic sectors. This can be seen as an advantage in harmonizing the understanding of the context and in harmonizing with government planning. The analysis identifies 3 main groups of risk drivers, their likelihood and potential severity and how they might impact the population: a) Risk related to political instability and insecurity; b) Risk related to the economic context; c) Risk related to natural hazards and epidemics.

For each one of those 3 groups of risk, a most likely scenario is designed by semester based on the evolution of the existing context. This made it possible to project the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance throughout the 2 years covered by this HNO (2021-2022), according to the impact of optimal humanitarian responses or limited humanitarian responses (funds, access to populations in need).

The risk analysis could be further strengthened by a more detailed analysis of not only hazards but vulnerabilities and exposure, and of how risks interrelate, using a systemic risk lens.

HNO Quotes

- *“More cases of Covid-19 are identified in the country. Seasonal heavy rainfall episodes could affect the Northern departments of the country and the Centre ones. The threat of seismic hazards is still present. The impact of the 2021 hurricane season could affect spring crops and food insecurity”* (HNO, page 56).

Is the HRP risk-informed?

Yes. Response analysis is based on the risks identified in the HNO and some assumptions to the implementation of HRP are identified and plan to be mitigated. Capacities of the population to cope with crisis have been assessed to better frame humanitarian response activities.

The HRP is structured around 4 strategic, cross-sectoral objectives that encompass both responding to needs and the immediate, underlying and root causes of the humanitarian situation. The development of the HRP mobilized humanitarian actors, but also development actors and members of sector working groups. The first strategic objective of the HRP emphasizes on this aspect unambiguously: *“by the end of 2022, joint humanitarian and development actors’ efforts will contribute to a reduction of at least 20% in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance”* (HRP, page 10).

Collaboration between humanitarian and development actors are referenced on a general level, with room for improvement in terms of tangible results and specific linkages to DRR.

Synergy has been sought with various medium and long-term actions and / or initiatives in terms of social safety nets, food security and protection against GBV.

HRP quotes

- *“The Shelter sector will contribute to the promotion and training campaigns on the principles of safer construction (Build Back Safer), with technical considerations of climate change adaptation and resilience to disasters”* (cf. HRP, page 64).
- The WASH sector *“will map and protect at-risk infrastructure”* (cf. HRP, page 61).
- Training on Build Back Safer techniques for construction workers and cash transfer for people exposed to natural hazards to build or repair their house with good quality material and relevant construction techniques (cf. HRP, page 64).

Do humanitarian coordination arrangements involve DRR stakeholders?

Yes. In Haiti, Humanitarian sector groups working on humanitarian activities include both emergency and long-term development actors. However, collaboration could be enhanced through a joint and coordinated work plan on scaling up risk-informed humanitarian action.