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September Special 2015

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, San José, Costa Rica

DISASTER RESPONSE

USAID/OFDA Responds to Tropical Storm Erika

Although the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) forecast a below-average 2015 Hurricane Season for the Atlantic, it only takes one storm to cause serious damage.

On Thursday, August 28, Dominica learned this the hard way, when Tropical Storm (TS) Erika passed over the island nation, dumping 12 inches of rain in nine hours. The result was overflowed rivers and landslides that swept away homes and destroyed roads and bridges all over the island.

"I have never seen rain like that before" said Disaster Risk Management Specialist (DRMS) Cecil Shillingford who was stationed on Dominica.

The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) has confirmed 12 deceased, 22 people missing, and 20 injured. NEOC also lists that there are 574 people homeless and 713 individuals had to be evacuated from their homes in the Petit Savanne area. As of mid-September, eight shelters



Photo by Cecil Shillingford, USAID/OFDA

One of the many roads washed away during the flooding on Dominica.

are open, housing over 400 people.

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) puts the initial estimate of the damage to roads and bridges at \$226 million.

In response, USAID/OFDA immediately activated four surge capacity consultants, to help with damage and needs assessment. Regional Advisor John Kimbrough and DRMS Audrey Mullings also traveled to Dominica to lead the response.

In partnership with the Dominica Red Cross, USAID/OFDA donated

emergency supplies for affected families. Such supplies included emergency kitchen kits, gas kitchenettes, mattresses, building tools, emergency generators, cleaning supplies, hygiene kits, and some first-necessity food items.

The beneficiaries of this donation had to evacuate their homes in Petit Savanne, and are currently occupying temporary shelters in the capital, Roseau.



Some of the destruction caused by the 12 inches of rain that fell in just nine hours.

Photos by Cecil Shillingford, USAID/OFDA



Photo by John Kimbrough, USAID/OFDA

Dominica Red Cross Society President Phillip White accepts the USAID/OFDA donated generators from DRMS Audrey Mullings and DRMS Cecil Shillingford.



Photo by Audrey Mullings, USAID/OFDA

Generators donated by USAID/OFDA to the Dominica Red Cross.



Photo by John Kimbrough, USAID/OFDA

Family from Petite Savanne area receive supplies from Director General Kathleen Pinard-Byrne as DRMS Cecil Shillingford and DRMS Audrey Mullings look on.