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## **Situational Report #2**

### **Hurricane Melissa**

**Submitted by:** Caritas Antilles

**Submission Date:** October 28, 2025

**Location:** Jamaica

### **Key Points:**

- The Caritas Antilles Emergency Response Team (CAERT) has been activated as of Saturday, October 25, 2025, and staff members are available to deploy as of November 1, 2025. See annex for full list of CAERT team members.
- Caritas Antilles is in close contact with key partners for potential collaboration, including Church World Service, Food For the Poor, CRS EMPOWER, and Caritas Dominican Republic.
- Caritas Antilles is awaiting a formal humanitarian declaration from the Jamaican Prime Minister, Andrew Holness, to request and submit an Emergency Appeal to Caritas Internationalis.
- Caritas Antilles is currently kitting and tallying available prepositioned stock in their St Lucia warehouse, for potential shipment to Jamaica.
- Caritas Antilles is organizing a PSEA/safeguarding refresher training to Youth Emergency Action Committee (YEAC) members in St Lucia, Dominica and Grenada, for potential deployment to Jamaica.
- The church partners in Jamaica have identified a team of 3 colleagues who will be leading the response in their respective dioceses: Montego Bay, Mandeville, and Kingston. Caritas Antilles is coordinating with this team and CRS EMPOWER for launch of needs assessment post hurricane landfall.
- The Bishop of Montego Bay participated in a story-interview with NewsWeek on October 27, 2025 to share the potential needs on the ground, as well as ways in which the church is planning its response efforts.
- Caritas Antilles has been approved with a 100,000 USD funding opportunity through CRS EMPOWER and its back donor Arthur M Blank Family Foundation.

### **Situation Overview:**

Since the first SitRep, Hurricane Melissa has rapidly intensified — evolving into a Category 5 storm with sustained winds estimated around 165–175 mph as it approached the Caribbean.

The slow forward motion of the system means it is expected to dump high volumes of rain (up to 30–40 inches) over parts of Jamaica, southern Hispaniola (including southern Haiti), and the adjacent coastlines, elevating risks of catastrophic flooding and landslides. Death-tolls are being reported: at least three deaths in Jamaica, three in Haiti, and one in the Dominican Republic. In Jamaica, over 800 shelters have been activated, airports closed, and mass evacuations ordered —



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government sources state "many communities will not survive" if fully exposed to the storm surge and winds.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is actively coordinating with UN Country Teams, regional disaster agencies and national authorities in Jamaica, Haiti and Cuba — with deployment of staff to Jamaica to strengthen readiness and coordination. The World Food Programme (WFP) is pre-positioning mobile warehouses, logistics assets, emergency food kits (initially airlifted) and supporting government responses in Jamaica (via the national disaster management office ODPEM). The regional body Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) is engaged via national disaster management offices (e.g., the Jamaican Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management ODPEM) as part of the coordination structure for pre-impact readiness and response.

### **Affected Population:**

The hurricane has affected large parts of the island, particularly the southwestern and central parishes, including Westmoreland, Saint Elizabeth, Manchester, and Clarendon, where authorities report extensive wind damage, flooding, and storm surge reaching up to four meters along low-lying coastal areas. Preliminary assessments indicate that up to 1.5 million people—more than half of Jamaica’s population of 2.8 million—may be directly impacted by the storm through displacement, infrastructure loss, or service disruptions. The Jamaica Public Service Company has reported widespread power outages affecting nearly one-third of homes and businesses, and telecommunications providers are operating on emergency backup systems.

The situation in Jamaica remains critical, with emergency services focusing on rescue operations, shelter management, and rapid needs assessments as weather conditions gradually improve.

### **Partnership/Coordination:**

On October 28, 2025, Caritas Antilles (CA) Regional Director met with FFTP’s Response Director to navigate opportunities for collaboration. In these discussions, the opportunity to potentially utilize FFTP space in Kingston for warehousing and/or command center, was discussed, with CA Regional Director pending to get back confirmation. Through FFTP, CA was informed that Jamaican customs still require humanitarian entities to follow normal importation procedures, however, they are committed to expedite the process given the ongoing situation. No waivers have yet been put in place by Jamaica port authorities.

Caritas Antilles has also joined the shelter cluster to identify shelter and small repair needs for Jamaica, and to identify opportunities for collaboration.

The Archdiocese of Kingston has set up a team of emergency coordinators on the ground composed of 3 leads, one from each diocesan structure (Montego Bay, Mandeville and Kingston). Caritas Antilles is coordinating the initial response effort, including cross referencing, with CRS



EMPOWER support, the prepositioned items in St Lucia with the initial list of in-kind assistance shared by the team in Jamaica: Canned and dry foods, water, blankets, lumber and zinc, school supplies, tarps, solar-powered or battery operated lanterns/ flashlights, mattresses, water boots, adult and infant diapers, power tools like chain saws, disinfectants, clothing, toiletries, bedding-sheets, towels, and nutritional supplement such as Glucerna/Ensure. Caritas Antilles also received the lit of prepositioned items available through Caritas Dominican Republic (DR) and available prepositioned items (mainly 3815 tarps) through CRS in Panama.

With the multiple options of prepositioned items across strategic points in the region, CA is coordinating with the Jamaica response team on the best avenue to utilizing existing prepositioned items, which may well be activating all point in St Lucia, Panama and the DR.

### **Emergency Preparedness & Response:**

The Caritas Antilles Emergency Response Team (CAERT) was activated on October 25, 2025, with staff members available for deployment beginning November 1. CAERT is currently verifying and kitting prepositioned stock at its St. Lucia warehouse for potential shipment to Jamaica once access conditions permit, while also organizing PSEA and safeguarding refresher sessions for Youth Emergency Action Committee (YEAC) members in St. Lucia, Dominica, and Grenada to support possible deployment. Caritas Antilles, with its recently approved 100,000 USD in Rapid Response Funds, is currently navigating a strategic response approach that may focus on replenishment or prepositioned items and logistics. Caritas Antilles is also planning on activating an Emergency Appeal through CI and hopes Caritas sister organizations join this effort in responding to the need in Jamaica.

Caritas Antilles is currently planning to deploy available personnel from its membership {Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia}, as well as technical advisors from CRS EMPOWER, mainly from PQM, Supply Chain, MEAL. These key humanitarians will collaborate with the church partners identified as response leads in the dioceses of Montego Bay, Mandeville, and Kingston.

Given the multi-agency mobilization and prepositioning of supplies, Caritas Antilles will leverage these systems to ensure that its response and prepositioned kits are coordinated, complementary and registered with national coordination platforms.

Where Caritas Antilles and its Diocesan partners in Jamaica has presence, they are planning to link directly with WFP, UNICEF, OCHA and national disaster authorities to ensure humanitarian access, avoid duplication, and tap into larger logistics capacities (e.g., mobile warehouses, telecommunications back-ups). Caritas is also monitoring which relief items, logistics assets and regional supply hubs (e.g., the Caribbean Regional Logistics Hub in Barbados mentioned by WFP) are available, so the network can integrate or link into that supply chain rather than rely solely on isolated sourcing and shipment.



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Media engagement has already begun, with the Bishop of Montego Bay sharing anticipated needs and response plans in a Newsweek interview on October 27, 2025.