

Ministries Rush in With Assistance After ‘Mind-Boggling’ Damage in Puerto Rico, Dominica

On Sept. 18, Hurricane Maria—a Category 5 storm at the time—raked Dominica. Because Samaritan’s Purse has had such a large ministry footprint on multiple Caribbean islands after Irma’s destructive path, we were able to send one of our team members on Wednesday to view the damage. Now DART members are distributing relief supplies to assist the 73,500 beleaguered residents there. By Oct. 1, six nurses will be serving in multiple health care facilities alongside local medical staff.

Dominica is a mountainous Caribbean island nation with lush tropical rainforests and sprawling plantations, where sugar cane, bananas and citrus fruits are grown. Maria stripped away vegetation, snapped trees in half, ripped off roofs and slung debris in every direction. An estimated 75 percent of the homes are now uninhabitable. There is a decreased availability of clean water and food.

Dominica Was Devastated by Category 5 Hurricane Maria

The damage was “mind-boggling

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Downgraded to a Category 4, Maria next pummeled Puerto Rico. Its 155-mph winds knocked out electricity to the entire island, leaving its 3.4 million people in the dark. It triggered landslides and massive flooding as roads turned into raging debris-laden rivers. "There's a humanitarian emergency here in Puerto Rico. This is an event without precedent," Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello said.

We have a team on the island to coordinate a major logistical and operations hub, from which we've flown multiple aircraft filled with supplies across the Caribbean. Our team members are safe, and we were able to relocate our planes before Maria hit the island.

At least 30 people have died throughout the Caribbean in Maria's wake.

MeGenerators Provide a Critical Power Source to Hard-Hit Areas

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At the same time, we are working on the island of Antigua, where we are reaching out to about 1,600 displaced residents of Barbuda. They were evacuated to Antigua after Hurricane Irma obliterated that island. On Sept. 23, an 11-member DART flew to Barbuda to assist families in debris and home cleanup.

Samaritan's Purse also worked on the Turks and Caicos Islands, bringing relief to more than 5,000 households after the nation was hit by both hurricanes Irma and Maria.

In addition, Samaritan's Purse continues to assist homeowners in Texas and Florida, still recovering after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma rampaged through their two states. We are currently working at five sites in Texas and two locations in Florida.

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This article originally appeared on Samaritan's Purse. If you feel led to donate to hurricane relief, check out one of these Christ-centered charities: Convoy of Hope, Samaritan's Purse. For more options, [click here](#).