



# Hurricane Milton

## Situation Report #2

October 12, 2024

**Project HOPE's Emergency Response Team is on the ground in Florida responding to urgent needs in the wake of Hurricane Milton. We are coordinating with local partners to ensure that our medicine, water, and hygiene supply distributions reach the most affected communities.**

### Situation Overview

**Hurricane Milton made landfall Wednesday evening in Siesta Key, near Sarasota, Florida as a Category 3 storm.** As the storm approached it cause an outbreak of tornados across central and south Florida that damaged homes and buildings and contributed to many of the 17 storm-related deaths from Hurricane Milton. Two days after landfall, 1.9 million remain without power and communities are still clearing debris. Hurricane Milton caused extensive flooding, up to 18 inches of rain in some areas, and storm surges up to 8 feet along the western coastline. Search and rescue is winding down and response teams are pivoting to longer-term recovery efforts.

During the storm, shelters in Florida housed more than 80,000. Now, the remaining open shelters are housing people who require specific assistance, including those with mobility, disability, or elevated medical needs.

**Immediate needs in the region include the restoration of electrical power, the provision of essential hygiene supplies, and reconnecting communities with access to health care,** especially under-resourced communities that may be hesitant to seek care

### Key Updates

- **Hurricane Milton made landfall near Sarasota, Florida as a Category 3 storm,** bringing up to 18 inches of rain, causing flash floods, and spurring tornados across south and central Florida.
- **Project HOPE is partnering with SAMU First Response** to support health facilities and affected communities with distributions of medicine, water, and essential hygiene and cleaning supplies.
- **Milton is the third hurricane to impact the region this season,** leaving communities stretched for resources and under intense strain while they begin recovery.
- **Repairing disrupted access to health care and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) supplies is the most immediate need for impacted communities.**



due to income levels, language barriers, and/or migratory status. In addition, Project HOPE's team on the ground has identified a need for surge staffing support and relief for health workers at health facilities in the most heavily impacted communities along the western Florida coastline.



Project HOPE and SAMU team members distribute water, cleaning supplies, personal hygiene items, and wound care supplies at a food and supply distribution organized by the Sarasota County chapter of the NAACP. Photo by Project HOPE staff, 2024.

## Project HOPE is Responding

Project HOPE and SAMU First Response (SAMU) have a team of emergency response experts and paramedics from North Macedonia, Spain, and the United States working in the Sarasota, Florida area, providing support to local first responders, clearing roadways, and delivering critical medicine and humanitarian relief supplies in the most affected communities. Our team is conducting a rapid assessment of medium and long-term needs while quickly addressing urgent needs and distributing essential health, hygiene, cleaning, and water supplies.

Project HOPE's response team has already delivered more than 1,500 over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and other WASH items to communities in Lee, Charlotte, and Sarasota counties, coordinating with community associations, health facilities, and local organizations to ensure we are reaching those most affected by the storm through trusted channels. As Project HOPE's response to Hurricane Milton continues, our emergency response team will continue to coordinate with county health officials as well as local free and charitable clinics, which serve low-income communities and are critical to ensuring health equity in emergency responses. At the time of this report, **Project HOPE is seeing urgent WASH, health, and mental health needs, particularly among under-resourced and historically marginalized communities.**

The emergency response team has received surge staffing support requests from several free and charitable clinics and county officials further north along the western Florida coastline. The team will be confirming opportunities to deploy medical volunteers over the weekend so that we can provide much-needed relief to frontline health workers.

***“We're also looking out for mental health and psychosocial support needs, especially recognizing that these communities have just gone through two almost back-to-back hurricanes, Helene and Milton, so people are emotionally having a difficult time.”***

***— Andrea Dunne-Sosa,  
Senior Regional Director for  
Domestic & Multi-Regional  
Programs***

In the United States, Project HOPE recently responded to Hurricane Idalia in 2023, Hurricane Ian in 2022, and Hurricane Ida in 2021 by providing surge staffing to health facilities, delivering urgently needed supplies to affected communities, and equipping health facilities with medicines and supplies.

Together, Project HOPE and SAMU previously conducted joint responses to the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye, Syria, and Morocco last year, aiding in search and rescue and providing immediate medical care. **Project HOPE is committed to responding to Hurricane Milton in Florida as we continue to support communities impacted by Hurricane Helene in North Carolina.**



Peter, a community center cook in Suncoast Estates, which is the largest mobile home community in the United States, stands with water and hygiene supplies distributed by Project HOPE. With more than 2,000 residences and several camps with unhoused populations living in tents, RVs, and makeshift shelters, the community is predominantly home to low-income families. Many residents reported cuts and small injuries from cleaning trees and other debris, prompting Project HOPE to donate bandages, antibiotic ointment, and OTC medicines. Photo by Project HOPE staff, 2024.

*“One gentleman broke down in tears in a hotel lobby and said 'I have no place to go. My house has been completely flooded, I've lost everything'. So, we actually administered psychological first aid and provided support in the hotel lobby where we worked together with hotel staff to get him connected to some resources. We were fortunate to be able to find him a place to stay.”*

— Andrea Dunne-Sosa,  
Senior Regional Director for  
Domestic & Multi-Regional  
Programs

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