

## Quick Environment Points – Hurricane Melissa, Jamaica

1. Debris clearance is a major need. Vegetation debris can be recycled (and support restarting agricultural activities). Housing and other debris can be reused, reprocessed or recycled. The scale of debris management likely exceeds the capacities of the National Solid Waste Management Authority, particularly in rural areas.

Debris management is a labor intensive, medium-term task. Initial (first weeks) clearing is to allow access followed by processing and recycling over 2-3 months. Cash-based labor intensive and combined labor/machine approaches are effective ways to clear and process debris. The multi-month debris management timeline provides an opportunity to transfer funds to the disaster-affected beyond a single gratis payment. Debris management can be integrated into Parish-based relief and recovery efforts.

Debris management guidance is available through these links:

<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/disaster-waste-management-guidelines>, and <https://unhcr-sheltercluster-static.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Quick%20Guide%20Post%20Disaster%20Debris%20Management.pdf?VersionId=ERRawtkbCk0u55K5Ohvs9D5A2T1dzFYX>. Also, see below for a link to organizations which are involved in processing waste in Jamaica.

2. The nature of damage to housing needs to be identified. If damage is primarily to roofs, then plastic sheeting is an option to restore immediate shelter (the plastic will have a 6-month operational life). If damage is to walls (e.g., from flooding) then plastic sheeting may be less useful. (A mapping of the type of damage to buildings base on damage assessments will be useful in considering the scale of materials assistance needed.)

The provision of galvanized metal roofing may be a better long term option than providing plastic sheeting when considering cost efficiency, reduction of carbon footprint, operational efficiency and facilitating a transition to recovery.

3. Waste from humanitarian aid packaging needs to be considered. Where possible, packaging should be minimized and processes put in place to collect waste associated with humanitarian aid, including in collective shelters. A list of recycling companies in Jamaica can be found here [waste management and recycling facilities in country](#) (courtesy of the [WREC Project](#)).
4. Hazardous waste is likely a concentrated issue in urban areas (e.g., Montego Bay) and needs specific technical assessments and operations plans.
5. Extensive flooding may have affected onshore and offshore environmental conditions. These issues will likely be covered in a Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), with results available in 4 to 5 weeks. Preliminary PDNA results can be used to develop more specific environment-based relief and recovery plans and projects.

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