



# THE ROLE OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY

IN

## HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION

A STRATEGIC PREPAREDNESS FRAMEWORK

A WHITE PAPER  
PREPARED BY



Outreach Aid to the Americas

*Alcance de Ayuda a las Americas*

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 [info@oaausa.org](mailto:info@oaausa.org)

 (305) 884-0441

 [www.oaausa.org](http://www.oaausa.org)



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## THE ROLE OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY IN HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION

### A Strategic Preparedness Framework

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cuba is experiencing the most severe multidimensional crisis since the collapse of the Soviet Union. What was once described as a prolonged economic downturn has evolved into a complex humanitarian emergency characterized by chronic food insecurity, widespread shortages of medicines and medical supplies, prolonged electrical blackouts, fuel scarcity, transportation disruptions, deteriorating public services, declining agricultural production, and unprecedented levels of outward migration.

Unlike previous periods of hardship, the current crisis is occurring simultaneously across multiple sectors. Cuba's energy system, healthcare infrastructure, transportation network, food distribution system, and public administration structures are all experiencing significant stress. The cumulative effect has produced growing public frustration, declining confidence in state institutions, increasing vulnerability among elderly and low-income populations, and growing concern among international observers regarding the country's stability.

At the same time, an important and often overlooked development has emerged: the increasing role of faith-based organizations and independent community networks as providers of humanitarian assistance, social support, and local stabilization.

For more than three decades, religious organizations across Cuba—including Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, Mennonite, and interdenominational networks—have quietly developed extensive humanitarian capacities. These networks now represent one of the largest and most trusted non-governmental infrastructures operating throughout the country.

Collectively, these organizations maintain hundreds of churches, ministry centers, house churches, warehouses, community outreach programs, and volunteer networks distributed throughout every province and municipality. In many communities, churches have become trusted local institutions capable of identifying vulnerable populations, distributing assistance, organizing volunteers, and maintaining social cohesion during periods of crisis.

Recent developments have reinforced the strategic importance of these networks. U.S. policymakers, humanitarian organizations, and international donors increasingly recognize faith-based organizations as potentially effective channels for humanitarian assistance delivery due to their local legitimacy, operational experience, and nationwide reach.



This white paper examines:

- ✓ The current humanitarian, economic, and governance crisis in Cuba.
- ✓ Potential scenarios that could lead to accelerated instability or political transition.
- ✓ Lessons learned from previous international humanitarian emergencies and democratic transitions.
- ✓ The evolving role of faith-based organizations as humanitarian responders and community stabilizers.
- ✓ The preparedness of the United States Government, international donors, humanitarian organizations, and civil society actors to respond to a major crisis in Cuba.
- ✓ Policy recommendations designed to improve humanitarian preparedness, reduce human suffering, strengthen community resilience, and support an eventual peaceful democratic transition.

The central conclusion of this paper is straightforward:

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***If Cuba experiences a major humanitarian emergency, significant political instability, or an accelerated democratic transition, faith-based organizations and independent civil society networks will likely constitute one of the most important operational platforms available for humanitarian response, stabilization, and recovery.***

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Preparation for that possibility should begin now.



## I. INTRODUCTION

Few countries in the Western Hemisphere present a more complex combination of humanitarian vulnerability, political uncertainty, and strategic importance than Cuba.

Located only ninety miles from the United States, Cuba occupies a unique position in regional security, migration management, humanitarian preparedness, and democratic development. For decades, policymakers, scholars, humanitarian organizations, and members of the Cuban diaspora have debated how a future Cuban transition might unfold and how the international community should prepare.

Historically, discussions concerning Cuba's future have focused primarily on political change. Much less attention has been devoted to the humanitarian dimensions of a potential transition.

Today, however, humanitarian considerations have become impossible to ignore.

Food insecurity, medical shortages, electrical system failures, transportation disruptions, and declining public services are affecting millions of Cubans. Simultaneously, many traditional state institutions appear increasingly constrained in their ability to respond effectively to growing public needs.

The emergence of faith communities as humanitarian actors has therefore become one of the most significant developments in contemporary Cuba.

This paper seeks to examine that reality and provide practical recommendations for preparedness, response, stabilization, and recovery.

## II. CUBA'S CURRENT HUMANITARIAN AND GOVERNANCE CRISIS

### Overview

Cuba is experiencing one of the most severe and complex crises in its modern history. Unlike previous periods of economic hardship, the current situation is characterized by the simultaneous deterioration of multiple systems essential to the functioning of society. Food production and distribution, healthcare services, electrical generation, transportation, water systems, public infrastructure, and government service delivery are all experiencing significant stress.

While Cuba has endured previous economic crises, including the "Special Period" following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the present emergency differs in several important respects. First, the crisis is occurring after decades of accumulated infrastructure deterioration and underinvestment. Second, Cuba faces severe demographic challenges, including an aging population, declining workforce participation, and sustained outward migration. Third, many of the social safety mechanisms that helped communities cope during previous crises have weakened considerably.



The result is a multidimensional humanitarian emergency that affects virtually every aspect of daily life.

This chapter examines the principal components of Cuba's current crisis and assesses their implications for humanitarian preparedness, social stability, and potential political transition.

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### **Food Insecurity and Nutritional Vulnerability**

Food insecurity has emerged as one of the most visible manifestations of Cuba's broader economic decline.

For decades, Cuba has relied heavily on imported food to meet domestic demand. Today, shortages of foreign exchange, fuel, agricultural inputs, transportation capacity, and productive labor have significantly reduced the government's ability to import and distribute food throughout the country.

Agricultural production has declined sharply in recent years. Production of staple crops, livestock products, and sugar has fallen substantially, increasing dependence on imports at a time when foreign currency reserves remain severely constrained. Food prices have risen dramatically, placing basic nutrition beyond the reach of many households.

Reports from churches, independent observers, and community organizations indicate that vulnerable populations—including the elderly, persons with disabilities, single-parent households, and individuals dependent on fixed pensions—are increasingly unable to secure adequate nutrition.

Many families now spend the majority of their income attempting to obtain basic food products. Others rely on remittances from relatives abroad, informal markets, or humanitarian assistance provided by religious organizations and community networks.

The growing prevalence of food insecurity raises significant concerns regarding public health, social stability, and the resilience of vulnerable populations in the event of further disruptions.

### **Collapse of Public Healthcare Capacity**

Historically, the Cuban government has highlighted healthcare as one of the country's principal achievements. However, the healthcare system now faces profound challenges that have significantly reduced its effectiveness.

Hospitals and clinics report shortages of medicines, medical supplies, laboratory equipment, diagnostic materials, and specialized treatment resources. Frequent electrical outages and fuel shortages further complicate healthcare delivery, particularly in rural and provincial areas.



The emigration of medical professionals has compounded these difficulties. Many physicians, nurses, technicians, and healthcare specialists have left the country or sought alternative employment opportunities, reducing the system's capacity to respond to growing needs.

Patients increasingly report difficulty obtaining essential medications, including treatments for diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and other chronic illnesses. Preventive care services have also been affected.

Faith-based organizations, community groups, and humanitarian actors have increasingly attempted to fill some of these gaps by providing medicines, medical supplies, and support services. Nevertheless, available resources remain insufficient to meet growing demand.

The deterioration of healthcare capacity represents not only a humanitarian concern but also a potential catalyst for broader social unrest if conditions continue to worsen.

### **Energy System Failure and Electrical Blackouts**

The Cuban energy sector has become one of the most critical vulnerabilities affecting national stability.

Aging power plants, fuel shortages, maintenance deficiencies, and inadequate investment have combined to produce repeated and prolonged electrical outages throughout the island.

In many provinces, residents experience daily blackouts lasting several hours. In some regions, outages have extended for days at a time.

The consequences extend far beyond inconvenience. Electricity shortages affect:

- Hospitals and healthcare facilities
- Water pumping systems
- Food refrigeration and preservation
- Schools and universities
- Telecommunications
- Industrial production
- Transportation services
- Commercial activity
- Residential living conditions

Businesses struggle to operate, agricultural products spoil before reaching markets, and families face increasing hardship in preserving food and maintaining basic household functions.

Extended blackouts also contribute to public frustration, psychological stress, and declining confidence in government institutions.

The electrical crisis has become one of the most visible symbols of broader state capacity challenges.



## Fuel Shortages and Transportation Disruptions

Fuel shortages have significantly disrupted transportation and logistics systems across Cuba. Public transportation services operate at reduced capacity. Bus routes have been curtailed, freight transportation has become increasingly unreliable, and the movement of agricultural products from rural areas to urban centers has been affected.

Fuel shortages also impact:

- Ambulance services
- Emergency response operations
- Agricultural production
- Food distribution
- Water delivery
- Electrical generation
- Humanitarian logistics

The resulting disruptions create cascading effects throughout the economy and further complicate efforts to respond to humanitarian needs.

In many communities, transportation limitations isolate vulnerable populations from healthcare facilities, markets, schools, and social services.

## Water, Sanitation, and Public Infrastructure

Water and sanitation systems face increasing pressure due to aging infrastructure, electrical outages, maintenance deficiencies, and resource shortages.

Interruptions in water service have become increasingly common in many communities. Water pumping stations frequently depend on unstable electrical supplies, while aging distribution networks contribute to significant losses.

Public infrastructure generally reflects decades of underinvestment and deferred maintenance.

Housing conditions have deteriorated in many urban and rural communities. Roads, bridges, public buildings, and utility systems require substantial rehabilitation.

A major natural disaster—particularly a hurricane—could quickly overwhelm existing response capacity and significantly worsen humanitarian conditions.

The vulnerability of critical infrastructure remains one of the principal risks facing Cuba today.

## Migration and Demographic Decline

Cuba is experiencing one of the largest migration waves in its history.



Hundreds of thousands of Cubans have emigrated in recent years, seeking economic opportunity, family reunification, and improved living conditions abroad.

This migration has several important implications:

First, it reduces the available workforce needed to sustain economic recovery.

Second, it contributes to demographic aging.

Third, it creates additional strain on families left behind, particularly elderly relatives dependent on remittances and support from younger family members.

While remittances provide critical economic support for many households, migration also accelerates the loss of professional talent, technical expertise, healthcare workers, educators, and skilled labor.

The demographic consequences of sustained migration may affect Cuba's development prospects for decades.

### **Mental Health and Social Resilience**

Beyond material hardship, the current crisis is having profound social and psychological consequences.

Community leaders, pastors, priests, social workers, and healthcare providers increasingly report rising levels of anxiety, depression, hopelessness, and emotional distress.

The cumulative impact of food insecurity, healthcare shortages, blackouts, transportation difficulties, and uncertainty regarding the future has created significant psychological pressure on families and communities.

Faith communities have become important sources of emotional support, counseling, encouragement, and social cohesion.

Churches often serve as gathering places where individuals can access both material assistance and emotional support.

As conditions deteriorate, the role of trusted community institutions becomes increasingly important in maintaining resilience and preventing social fragmentation.

### **Governance Capacity and Public Confidence**

The Cuban government continues to maintain formal control over state institutions and public administration. However, its capacity to effectively address growing humanitarian and economic challenges appears increasingly constrained.



Resource limitations, infrastructure deterioration, workforce shortages, and declining economic performance have reduced the effectiveness of many public services.

Public frustration regarding shortages, blackouts, and deteriorating living conditions has become more visible in recent years.

While the government retains significant security and administrative capabilities, public confidence in its ability to solve emerging challenges has weakened.

At the same time, independent community actors—including faith-based organizations—have become increasingly important providers of practical assistance and local leadership.

This trend has important implications for future humanitarian response planning and any potential transition scenario.

### **Current Risk Assessment**

The convergence of multiple crises creates a situation in which additional shocks could have disproportionate consequences.

Potential triggering events include:

- A major hurricane or natural disaster
- Further deterioration of the electrical grid
- Significant disruptions in food imports
- Public health emergencies
- Severe fuel supply interruptions
- Large-scale social unrest
- Mass migration events

Any of these developments could significantly increase humanitarian needs and place additional strain on already stressed institutions.

The evidence suggests that Cuba is not facing a single-sector challenge but rather a systemic crisis affecting nearly every aspect of national life.

For humanitarian planners, policymakers, and civil society leaders, the central question is no longer whether serious vulnerabilities exist. The question is whether adequate preparations are being made to respond effectively should conditions deteriorate further.

The following chapters examine potential transition scenarios, humanitarian preparedness requirements, and the increasingly important role of faith communities and civil society networks in supporting vulnerable populations and strengthening community resilience.



### III. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

#### Overview

Cuba occupies a unique strategic position in the Western Hemisphere. Located approximately ninety miles from the United States, the island sits at the intersection of regional security, migration management, humanitarian preparedness, economic stability, democratic governance, and geopolitical competition.

As Cuba's humanitarian and economic crisis deepens, the implications extend well beyond the country's borders. A significant deterioration of conditions—or a rapid political transition—would have direct consequences for the United States, neighboring Caribbean nations, regional organizations, international humanitarian actors, and donor governments.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the strategic implications of Cuba's evolving crisis and identify considerations that should guide preparedness planning by governments, humanitarian organizations, faith-based institutions, and international partners.

The central premise of this chapter is that preparedness is far less costly than crisis response. Actions taken before a major emergency occurs can significantly reduce human suffering, improve regional stability, and strengthen the prospects for an orderly transition should political change occur.

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#### Cuba's Strategic Importance

For more than six decades, Cuba has occupied a unique place in U.S. foreign policy. The island's proximity to Florida means that developments within Cuba can quickly affect:

- U.S. homeland security
- Migration management
- Regional economic stability
- Maritime security
- Public health
- Disaster response
- International diplomacy

Unlike crises occurring in distant regions, events in Cuba can generate immediate consequences for U.S. federal, state, and local authorities.

A major humanitarian emergency in Cuba would almost certainly require coordination among multiple U.S. Government agencies, including:

- Department of State



- U.S. Agency for International Development
- Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Department of Defense
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Department of Treasury
- Department of Agriculture
- Intelligence Community

The complexity of these relationships highlights the importance of advance planning and interagency coordination.

### **Humanitarian Implications for the United States**

The most immediate consequence of a severe deterioration in Cuba would likely be humanitarian. Millions of Cubans already experience varying degrees of:

- Food insecurity
- Medicine shortages
- Electrical outages
- Transportation disruptions
- Reduced access to public services

Should these conditions worsen significantly, the demand for humanitarian assistance could increase rapidly.

Unlike many international emergencies, a Cuban humanitarian crisis would occur close to U.S. shores and would likely generate substantial public attention, congressional interest, and pressure for action.

The United States would face difficult policy questions:

- How should humanitarian assistance be delivered?
- Through which organizations should aid flow?
- How can assistance reach vulnerable populations while minimizing diversion risks?
- What role should faith-based organizations play?
- How should humanitarian assistance be coordinated with broader foreign policy objectives?

These questions are easier to answer before a crisis than during one.

### **Migration and Mass Displacement Risks**

Migration represents one of the most significant strategic concerns associated with Cuban instability.



Historically, periods of severe hardship have been accompanied by increased migration flows.

Examples include:

- Camarioca (1965)
- Mariel (1980)
- Balsero Crisis (1994)
- The post-2021 migration wave

A future humanitarian emergency could generate additional migration pressures through multiple pathways:

**Regular Migration**

Continued movement through legal and semi-legal channels.

**Irregular Land Migration**

Travel through third countries toward the United States.

**Maritime Migration**

Attempts to reach Florida and neighboring countries by boat or raft.

**Regional Displacement**

Movement to Caribbean and Latin American countries.

Large-scale migration would present operational challenges for:

- U.S. Coast Guard
- Department of Homeland Security
- State and local governments
- International organizations
- Regional governments

Migration planning therefore remains a critical component of preparedness efforts.

**Regional Security Considerations**

A major crisis in Cuba would affect regional security dynamics throughout the Caribbean Basin. Potential concerns include:

**Maritime Security**

- Increased vessel traffic
- Search and rescue operations
- Human smuggling
- Trafficking risks

**Border Management**

Increased migration pressures throughout the region



### **Organized Crime**

Exploitation of instability by criminal networks

### **Public Order Challenges**

Local instability associated with shortages and humanitarian conditions

While Cuba is not currently experiencing widespread violent conflict, severe humanitarian emergencies often create opportunities for illicit actors to exploit vulnerable populations.

Regional coordination would therefore be essential.

### **Implications for U.S. Southern Command**

U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) has long recognized Cuba as strategically important due to its geographic location and potential impact on regional stability.

Historically, SOUTHCOM has conducted preparedness exercises involving:

- Mass migration scenarios.
- Humanitarian assistance.
- Disaster response.
- Interagency coordination.
- Regional contingency planning.

A significant Cuban humanitarian emergency could require military support functions similar to those performed during previous disasters elsewhere in the hemisphere.

Such support could include:

- Logistics
- Transportation
- Communications
- Engineering
- Airlift and sealift
- Humanitarian coordination

Importantly, these roles would likely support civilian-led humanitarian operations rather than replace them.

Experience from Haiti and other emergencies demonstrates the importance of clearly defined civilian and military responsibilities.

### **The Role of the Department of State**

In any future Cuban crisis, the Department of State would likely assume the lead foreign policy and diplomatic coordination role.



Responsibilities could include:

- Diplomatic engagement
- International coordination
- Humanitarian policy
- Donor engagement
- Sanctions management
- Support for democratic processes
- Coordination with regional governments

The Department would also play a critical role in balancing humanitarian imperatives with broader foreign policy objectives.

### **The Role of DHA and Humanitarian Organizations**

DHA would likely serve as the principal U.S. Government agency responsible for humanitarian and recovery programming.

Potential responsibilities include:

- Humanitarian assessments
- Emergency food assistance
- Health interventions
- Shelter programs
- Recovery planning
- Civil society support
- Institutional strengthening

However, Cuba presents unique operational challenges.

Unlike many countries where DHA maintains a substantial in-country presence, Cuba currently lacks the large network of international development actors commonly found elsewhere.

As a result, humanitarian response may depend heavily upon:

- Faith-based organizations
- Community networks
- Local civil society
- International humanitarian partners
- Diaspora organizations

This reality underscores the importance of building relationships before a crisis occurs.

### **Faith-Based Organizations as Strategic Partners**

One of the most significant developments in Cuba's humanitarian landscape is the emergence of faith communities as credible operational partners.



These organizations possess several strategic advantages:

**Nationwide Presence**

Churches exist in virtually every province and municipality.

**Community Trust**

Religious institutions often maintain high levels of credibility.

**Volunteer Capacity**

Thousands of volunteers can be mobilized rapidly.

**Local Knowledge**

Church leaders understand community needs and vulnerabilities.

**Existing Infrastructure**

Many organizations possess facilities suitable for storage, staging, and distribution.

**Humanitarian Experience**

Numerous churches have decades of experience distributing food, medicines, and relief supplies.

These characteristics make faith communities uniquely valuable partners for future humanitarian operations.

Their importance extends beyond aid distribution to include community stabilization, communication, monitoring, and resilience building.

**International Donor Considerations**

International donors should recognize that Cuba's needs differ from those of many traditional humanitarian settings.

Future assistance may require simultaneous investments in:

- Emergency relief
- Community resilience
- Civil society strengthening
- Humanitarian logistics
- Local leadership development
- Institutional recovery

A phased approach will likely be necessary, moving gradually from emergency response toward recovery and long-term development.

Donors should also prioritize flexibility, recognizing that conditions may evolve rapidly.



## The Role of the Cuban Diaspora

The Cuban diaspora represents one of the most important potential contributors to future recovery and stabilization efforts.

Diaspora communities already provide:

- Remittances
- Humanitarian assistance
- Technical expertise
- Professional networks
- Private investment
- Advocacy

In the event of a major crisis or transition, diaspora engagement could expand significantly.

Professionals, entrepreneurs, humanitarian specialists, healthcare workers, educators, and faith leaders could all contribute valuable expertise and resources.

Preparedness planning should therefore incorporate diaspora engagement strategies.

## The Cost of Inaction

Perhaps the most important strategic lesson is that delayed preparation increases future costs.

Without adequate preparedness:

- Human suffering increases.
- Response costs rise.
- Recovery takes longer.
- Migration pressures grow.
- Social instability intensifies.
- Opportunities for peaceful transition diminish.

History consistently demonstrates that proactive planning is more effective and less expensive than reactive crisis management.

The same principle applies to Cuba.

## Strategic Opportunities

Despite significant challenges, the current situation also presents opportunities.

The emergence of faith-based humanitarian networks, growing international awareness of Cuba's humanitarian conditions, and expanding dialogue among government, academic, humanitarian, and civil society actors provide a foundation for constructive preparedness efforts.

Key opportunities include:



- Strengthening humanitarian preparedness.
- Expanding community resilience.
- Developing monitoring systems.
- Improving donor coordination.
- Supporting trusted local partners.
- Building recovery frameworks before they are needed.

These investments can improve outcomes regardless of which future scenario ultimately unfolds.

## Conclusion

Cuba's evolving crisis is not solely a Cuban issue.

Its geographic proximity, humanitarian dimensions, migration implications, and strategic significance make it a matter of regional and international concern.

The United States, neighboring governments, international organizations, donors, faith communities, and civil society actors all have a stake in promoting stability, reducing human suffering, and preparing for potential future contingencies.

The evidence suggests that effective preparedness will require broad cooperation among governmental and non-governmental actors, with particular attention to the growing role of faith-based organizations and community networks.

## IV. HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

### Overview

The preceding chapters have examined Cuba's current humanitarian crisis, historical patterns of resilience and vulnerability, potential future scenarios, and the strategic implications for the United States and the international community.

The central conclusion emerging from that analysis is clear: preparedness matters.

Whether Cuba experiences gradual deterioration, a major natural disaster, widespread social unrest, a negotiated transition, or a broader humanitarian emergency, the effectiveness of the response will depend largely on planning conducted before the crisis occurs.

This chapter presents a practical framework for humanitarian preparedness, stabilization, and response. It is not intended to prescribe a specific political outcome. Rather, it focuses on reducing human suffering, strengthening community resilience, preserving social stability, and ensuring that humanitarian assistance can reach vulnerable populations rapidly and effectively under a variety of scenarios.

**The framework is built around five core principles:**



1. Humanitarian assistance should be needs-based.
2. Local communities must play a central role.
3. Preparedness should precede crisis.
4. Coordination is essential.
5. Trusted local networks are the foundation of effective response.

The framework recognizes that no single institution will possess the resources, access, legitimacy, or operational capacity to respond alone. Success will depend upon coordinated action among governmental, humanitarian, faith-based, civil society, donor, and community actors.

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## Framework Objectives

The proposed Humanitarian Preparedness and Response Framework seeks to achieve six strategic objectives:

- ✓ **Objective 1**  
Save lives and reduce human suffering.
- ✓ **Objective 2**  
Protect vulnerable populations.
- ✓ **Objective 3**  
Strengthen community resilience.
- ✓ **Objective 4**  
Support social stability during periods of uncertainty.
- ✓ **Objective 5**  
Facilitate efficient and accountable humanitarian assistance.
- ✓ **Objective 6**  
Create conditions that support recovery and long-term development.

These objectives remain relevant regardless of the political context in which a crisis occurs.

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## Planning Assumptions

The framework is based on several assumptions derived from current conditions and historical experience.

### **Assumption One**

Humanitarian needs will likely exceed existing response capacity during the initial phase of a major crisis.

### **Assumption Two**

Government institutions may remain operational but experience significant capacity constraints.

### **Assumption Three**

Faith-based organizations and local community networks will likely represent the most extensive non-governmental operational infrastructure available throughout Cuba.



### **Assumption Four**

External humanitarian actors will initially have limited situational awareness and limited operational access.

### **Assumption Five**

Logistics, transportation, fuel, communications, and warehousing will be major operational challenges.

### **Assumption Six**

Preparedness investments made before a crisis occurs will significantly improve response effectiveness.

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## **Phases of Response**

The framework divides preparedness and response into four operational phases.

### **Phase I – Preparedness**

*Activities conducted before a crisis occurs.*

Objectives include:

- Planning.
- Training.
- Partner development.
- Resource identification.
- Risk monitoring.
- Community preparedness.

Preparedness activities may continue for years before activation becomes necessary.

### **Phase II – Crisis Onset**

*The period immediately following a major triggering event.*

Examples include:

- Natural disasters.
- Major blackouts.
- Food system disruption.
- Public health emergencies.
- Widespread unrest.

Primary priorities include:

- Situational awareness.
- Rapid assessments.
- Life-saving interventions.
- Information gathering.

- Coordination.

This phase may last days or weeks.

### **Phase III – Emergency Response**

*The period during which large-scale humanitarian assistance is required.*

Priorities include:

- Food assistance.
- Medical support.
- Water and sanitation.
- Shelter.
- Logistics.
- Community stabilization.
- Protection of vulnerable populations.

This phase may continue for several months.

### **Phase IV – Recovery and Stabilization**

*The transition from emergency assistance toward long-term recovery.*

Priorities include:

- Livelihood restoration.
- Infrastructure rehabilitation.
- Institutional strengthening.
- Community resilience.
- Economic recovery.
- Governance support.

This phase may last several years.

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## **Operational Pillars of the Framework**

The framework consists of seven mutually reinforcing operational pillars.

### **Pillar One – Community Humanitarian Monitoring**

*Effective response begins with accurate information.*

One of the greatest challenges in Cuba is the limited availability of reliable humanitarian data. The framework therefore recommends establishment of a Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative.

#### **Functions**

Community monitors would:



- Identify vulnerable populations.
- Track food security conditions.
- Monitor health concerns.
- Report infrastructure disruptions.
- Observe migration trends.
- Assess disaster impacts.
- Provide early warning information.

### **Benefits**

- Improved situational awareness.
- Faster response.
- Better resource allocation.
- Greater accountability.

Community-level information often becomes available long before official reporting systems recognize emerging problems.

### **Pillar Two – Humanitarian Logistics and Distribution**

*Humanitarian assistance is only effective if it reaches intended beneficiaries.*

The framework emphasizes the development of a decentralized distribution model relying upon trusted local networks.

Key components include:

#### **Warehousing**

Identification of:

- Church facilities.
- Community centers.
- Schools.
- Private storage facilities.

#### **Transportation**

Planning for:

- Trucks.
- Small vehicles.
- Maritime transport.
- Fuel availability.

#### **Distribution Sites**

Utilization of:

- Churches.
- Community facilities.
- Faith-based service centers.



- Temporary humanitarian hubs.

### **Pillar Three – Food Security and Nutritional Support**

*Food insecurity is likely to represent one of the largest humanitarian challenges.*

Preparedness planning should include:

#### **Emergency Food Commodities**

Identification of shelf-stable products suitable for rapid deployment.

#### **Vulnerable Population Mapping**

Special attention to:

- Elderly persons.
- Children.
- Pregnant women.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Individuals with chronic illnesses.

#### **Community Feeding Programs**

Support for:

- Church kitchens.
- Feeding centers.
- Community meal programs.
- Household distribution systems.

### **Pillar Four – Health and Medical Response**

*The healthcare system's current vulnerabilities require dedicated preparedness planning.*

Priority interventions include:

#### **Essential Medicines**

Identification of critical shortages and supply requirements.

#### **Medical Distribution Networks**

Utilization of trusted community partners.

#### **Mobile Medical Support**

Potential deployment of:

- Clinics.
- Medical teams.
- Telemedicine support.

#### **Public Health Monitoring**

Tracking of:

- Disease outbreaks.
- Malnutrition.
- Vulnerable populations.

### **Pillar Five – Community Stabilization and Resilience**

*Humanitarian response is not solely about commodities.*

Communities require:

- Information.
- Leadership.
- Trust.
- Emotional support.
- Social cohesion.

Faith communities often provide these functions naturally.

Preparedness planning should therefore recognize the importance of:

#### **Community Leaders**

Pastors, priests, lay leaders, educators, and local volunteers.

#### **Volunteer Mobilization**

Training and organization of community responders.

#### **Communications**

Accurate and trusted information channels.

#### **Psychosocial Support**

Addressing stress, trauma, anxiety, and hopelessness.

Strong communities are more resilient communities.

### **Pillar Six – Coordination and Information Sharing**

*Humanitarian operations involve multiple actors.*

Without coordination:

- Resources are wasted.
- Gaps emerge.
- Duplication occurs.
- Beneficiaries suffer.

The framework recommends establishment of a Humanitarian Coordination Cell.

Potential participants include:

- Faith-based organizations.



- Humanitarian NGOs.
- Donors.
- Academic institutions.
- Technical experts.
- International partners.

Functions include:

- Information sharing.
- Resource mapping.
- Operational planning.
- Gap identification.
- Lessons learned.

### **Pillar Seven – Accountability and Transparency**

*Public confidence is essential.*

Humanitarian operations must demonstrate:

- Fairness.
- Transparency.
- Accountability.
- Efficiency.

Recommended measures include:

- ✓ **Beneficiary Verification**
- ✓ **Distribution Tracking**
- ✓ **Monitoring and Evaluation**
- ✓ **Independent Oversight**
- ✓ **Community Feedback Mechanisms**

Maintaining public trust is as important as delivering assistance.

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### **The Strategic Role of Faith-Based Organizations**

A central feature of this framework is recognition of the unique capabilities of Cuba's faith community.

Faith-based organizations possess:

- Nationwide reach.
- Community trust.
- Volunteer networks.
- Existing infrastructure.
- Humanitarian experience.
- Local knowledge.
- Long-standing community relationships.



These characteristics position them as natural partners across all phases of preparedness and response. Importantly, their role extends beyond distribution.

Faith communities can support:

- Monitoring.
- Communications.
- Volunteer mobilization.
- Vulnerability identification.
- Community stabilization.
- Psychosocial support.
- Recovery efforts.

As conditions evolve, these organizations may become among the most important humanitarian actors operating within Cuba.

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### **Activation Triggers**

The framework should be activated when one or more indicators exceed predetermined thresholds.

Potential triggers include:

#### **Humanitarian Triggers**

- Severe food shortages.
- Public health emergencies.
- Medicine stock depletion.

#### **Infrastructure Triggers**

- Extended nationwide blackouts.
- Fuel supply disruptions.
- Water system failures.

#### **Disaster Triggers**

- Major hurricanes.
- Flooding.
- Infrastructure collapse.

#### **Social Triggers**

- Widespread unrest.
- Mass displacement.
- Migration surges.

Activation thresholds should be reviewed regularly.

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## Measuring Success

Preparedness efforts should be evaluated against measurable outcomes.

Potential indicators include:

- Number of trained community monitors.
- Number of mapped distribution sites.
- Volunteer capacity.
- Response times.
- Beneficiary reach.
- Commodity accountability.
- Community satisfaction.
- Reduction in unmet needs.

Preparedness should be treated as a continuous process rather than a one-time activity.

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## Conclusion

Humanitarian emergencies are inherently unpredictable. Their consequences, however, can be mitigated through preparation.

The framework presented in this chapter seeks to move beyond reactive crisis management toward proactive preparedness.

By investing in monitoring systems, logistics planning, community resilience, trusted local partnerships, and accountability mechanisms, humanitarian actors can significantly improve outcomes for vulnerable populations.

The framework's most important insight is that effective response will depend less on external institutions arriving after a crisis and more on strengthening trusted local networks before a crisis occurs.

Among those networks, faith-based organizations and community leaders represent one of Cuba's greatest humanitarian assets.

## V. FAITH COMMUNITIES AS HUMANITARIAN RESPONDERS

### Overview

One of the most significant yet often overlooked developments in Cuba over the past three decades has been the emergence of faith-based organizations as trusted providers of humanitarian assistance, community support, and local resilience.

As the Cuban government's ability to provide essential services has weakened, churches and faith-based organizations have increasingly stepped forward to fill critical gaps. Today, religious institutions represent one of the largest, most extensive, and most trusted non-governmental networks operating throughout the country.

While public attention frequently focuses on the political and diplomatic dimensions of Cuba's crisis, less attention has been given to the extraordinary humanitarian work being performed daily by Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Mennonite, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, and interdenominational organizations across the island.

These organizations are feeding the hungry, assisting the elderly, distributing medicines, supporting vulnerable families, responding to natural disasters, and providing emotional and spiritual support to communities facing increasing hardship.

In many areas, they have become indispensable components of local survival and resilience.

This chapter examines the capabilities, experience, infrastructure, and strategic importance of Cuba's faith-based humanitarian networks.

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## **The Evolution of Faith-Based Humanitarian Work in Cuba**

The role of churches in Cuban society has evolved significantly since the early years of the Revolution.

For many years, religious institutions operated under substantial restrictions and were largely excluded from public life. Despite these limitations, churches maintained local congregations, nurtured community relationships, and developed informal support systems that enabled them to remain present within communities throughout the island.

Beginning in the 1990s, Cuba's economic crisis created new humanitarian needs that exceeded government capacity.

During this period, many churches expanded their social ministries and began receiving assistance from international faith-based partners.

Over time, these efforts evolved into increasingly sophisticated humanitarian operations.

Today, faith communities possess decades of experience managing:

- Food assistance programs.
- Medical support initiatives.
- Disaster relief operations.
- Community development activities.
- Volunteer mobilization.

- Distribution logistics.
- Beneficiary monitoring.
- Emergency response efforts.

These experiences have created a foundation upon which future humanitarian operations can build.

### **A Nationwide Humanitarian Infrastructure**

One of the greatest strengths of Cuba's faith community is its extensive geographic reach.

Unlike many institutions that are concentrated in Havana or major urban centers, churches maintain a presence throughout the country.

Faith-based organizations collectively operate through:

- Churches.
- House churches.
- Mission centers.
- Community outreach programs.
- Educational facilities.
- Warehouses.
- Distribution sites.
- Volunteer networks.

These facilities are distributed across every province and nearly every municipality.

Many larger denominations maintain networks exceeding several hundred local congregations, providing access to both urban and rural populations.

This extensive presence enables churches to reach communities that may otherwise be difficult for external humanitarian organizations to access.

In practical terms, these networks constitute one of the most comprehensive last-mile delivery systems currently operating within Cuba.

### **Major Faith-Based Humanitarian Partners**

Although Cuba's faith community is diverse, several organizations possess particularly significant humanitarian capacities.

#### **Catholic Church and Caritas Cuba**

The Catholic Church represents one of the most extensive and institutionally developed faith-based networks in Cuba.



Through dioceses, parishes, religious orders, and Caritas Cuba, the Catholic Church maintains an extensive presence throughout the country.

Caritas Cuba has developed considerable experience in:

- Needs assessments.
- Humanitarian distributions.
- Disaster response.
- Elderly assistance.
- Medical support.
- Community outreach.

In recent years, Catholic dioceses have played increasingly important roles in receiving, coordinating, and distributing humanitarian assistance.

The Church's organizational structure allows it to operate across provincial and municipal boundaries while maintaining strong local relationships.

Its extensive parish network provides valuable infrastructure for humanitarian operations.

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### **Methodist Church of Cuba**

The Methodist Church has become one of the most active providers of community-based humanitarian assistance.

Methodist congregations throughout Cuba operate feeding programs, elderly support initiatives, community outreach projects, and emergency assistance activities.

In several communities, Methodist volunteers provide regular meals to hundreds of vulnerable individuals each week.

Their efforts demonstrate the ability of local congregations to mobilize resources, identify needs, and respond rapidly to changing conditions.

The Methodist Church's strong emphasis on community service has made it a respected humanitarian actor in many regions.

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### **Assemblies of God**

The Assemblies of God maintain one of the largest Evangelical networks in Cuba.

Their extensive church infrastructure, volunteer base, and community relationships provide substantial humanitarian potential.

Assemblies of God congregations have extensive experience managing:



- Food distributions.
- Disaster response.
- Community outreach.
- Volunteer mobilization.
- Family support programs.

Their broad geographic reach makes them particularly valuable partners in large-scale humanitarian operations.

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### **Western Baptist Convention**

The Western Baptist Convention represents another important component of Cuba's faith-based humanitarian infrastructure.

Baptist churches have long participated in:

- Community assistance programs.
- Disaster recovery.
- Educational initiatives.
- Humanitarian outreach.

Their established leadership structures and local congregational networks contribute to overall response capacity.

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### **Los Pinos Nuevos Evangelical Convention**

Los Pinos Nuevos maintains a substantial presence throughout Cuba and has extensive experience working with vulnerable communities.

The denomination's churches often serve as trusted gathering places and community support centers.

Their participation in humanitarian operations strengthens the diversity and reach of faith-based response efforts.

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### **Mennonite and Interdenominational Organizations**

Mennonite organizations have maintained humanitarian engagement in Cuba for decades.

Their programs have included:

- Food assistance.
- Hygiene kits.
- School supplies.
- Community development.



- Disaster recovery.

In addition, numerous interdenominational networks facilitate collaboration among smaller churches and ministries.

Together, these organizations significantly expand overall response capacity.

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### **Humanitarian Experience Under Difficult Conditions**

One of the most important characteristics of Cuba's faith-based organizations is that they have learned to operate under highly constrained conditions.

Churches routinely function despite:

- Transportation shortages.
- Fuel scarcity.
- Limited communications.
- Resource constraints.
- Infrastructure challenges.
- Government restrictions.

These realities have required churches to become highly adaptable and resourceful.

Many have developed informal logistics systems, volunteer networks, and distribution mechanisms capable of functioning even when conventional systems are disrupted.

This operational flexibility represents a valuable asset during humanitarian emergencies.

### **Existing Warehousing and Distribution Capacity**

Many faith-based organizations maintain access to facilities suitable for humanitarian operations.

While infrastructure quality varies, churches collectively possess:

- Storage areas.
- Distribution points.
- Community centers.
- Fellowship halls.
- Educational facilities.
- Provincial ministry centers.

These facilities can support:

- Commodity staging.
- Temporary warehousing.
- Volunteer coordination.
- Beneficiary registration.



- Food distributions.
- Medical assistance activities.

The strategic location of many churches within local communities reduces transportation requirements and facilitates direct beneficiary access.

### **Volunteer Mobilization Capacity**

Perhaps the greatest asset of Cuba's faith community is its people.

Across the island, churches have access to thousands of:

- Pastors.
- Priests.
- Lay leaders.
- Youth volunteers.
- Women's ministry leaders.
- Community coordinators.
- Medical professionals.
- Educators.

These individuals possess strong community relationships and a demonstrated commitment to service.

Volunteer responsibilities can include:

- Beneficiary identification.
- Distribution support.
- Crowd management.
- Monitoring.
- Reporting.
- Household visits.
- Transportation coordination.
- Emotional and spiritual support.

The ability to rapidly mobilize volunteers provides a significant operational advantage during emergencies.

### **Community Trust and Social Legitimacy**

Humanitarian effectiveness depends not only upon logistics but also upon trust. In many communities, churches are among the most trusted institutions in society.

Several factors contribute to this trust:

✓ **Long-Term Presence**

Churches remain present before, during, and after crises.



✓ **Community Relationships**

Leaders know local families and understand community dynamics.

✓ **Service Orientation**

Churches typically serve beneficiaries regardless of political affiliation, social status, or religious background.

✓ **Credibility**

Congregations witness firsthand the commitment of volunteers and leaders.

This trust enables churches to identify needs quickly and deliver assistance effectively.

### **Humanitarian Response Beyond Material Assistance**

The contribution of faith communities extends beyond food and medicine.

Churches provide:

- Emotional support.
- Counseling.
- Hope.
- Social connection.
- Community leadership.
- Conflict mitigation.
- Volunteer opportunities.
- Resilience building.

These functions become increasingly important during prolonged crises.

Humanitarian emergencies are not solely material challenges; they are also social and psychological challenges.

Faith communities often address both dimensions simultaneously.

### **Faith Communities as First Responders**

In many emergencies, local actors respond long before external assistance arrives.

This principle is particularly relevant in Cuba.

Following hurricanes, local churches frequently begin relief activities immediately by:

- Assessing needs.
- Organizing volunteers.
- Sharing available resources.
- Supporting displaced families.
- Coordinating community recovery efforts.

Their ability to act quickly stems from their continuous presence within affected communities.



As a result, churches often serve as de facto first responders.

### **Challenges Facing Faith-Based Organizations**

Despite their strengths, faith communities face important limitations. These include:

#### **Resource Constraints**

Demand frequently exceeds available resources.

#### **Transportation Challenges**

Fuel shortages affect logistics.

#### **Infrastructure Limitations**

Storage and distribution facilities vary in quality.

#### **Regulatory Constraints**

Operational restrictions may complicate humanitarian activities.

#### **Training Needs**

Additional training could strengthen preparedness and accountability systems.

These challenges underscore the need for expanded support and capacity-building efforts.

#### **Strategic Significance for Future Humanitarian Operations**

The cumulative evidence suggests that faith-based organizations represent one of the most important humanitarian assets currently available in Cuba.

Their strengths include:

- Nationwide presence.
- Trusted leadership.
- Volunteer capacity.
- Existing infrastructure.
- Operational experience.
- Community legitimacy.
- Humanitarian commitment.

These characteristics position faith communities as critical partners in preparedness, emergency response, stabilization, and recovery.

Future humanitarian strategies that fail to incorporate faith-based networks would overlook one of the country's most capable and trusted delivery systems.

### **Conclusion**



The growing role of faith communities is one of the most important developments in Cuba's humanitarian landscape.

Over decades, churches have evolved from primarily religious institutions into multifaceted community organizations capable of delivering assistance, mobilizing volunteers, supporting vulnerable populations, and strengthening resilience during times of crisis.

As humanitarian needs continue to grow, these organizations are likely to become even more important.

Their extensive networks, local legitimacy, operational experience, and commitment to service make them indispensable partners in any future humanitarian response.

## **VI. FAITH COMMUNITIES AS COMMUNITY STABILIZERS**

### **Overview**

Humanitarian assistance is often measured in tangible outputs: meals distributed, medicines delivered, shelters established, or beneficiaries served. While these activities are critically important, they represent only part of the contribution that faith communities make during times of crisis.

Around the world, experience has demonstrated that communities facing severe hardship require more than material assistance. They require trusted leadership, social cohesion, credible information, emotional support, volunteer mobilization, conflict mitigation, and hope. These less visible factors often determine whether communities remain resilient or descend into instability.

In Cuba, faith communities increasingly perform these functions.

As economic conditions deteriorate, public services weaken, and uncertainty grows, churches, religious leaders, and faith-based organizations have emerged as some of the country's most trusted and resilient institutions. Their role extends far beyond humanitarian distribution. They help preserve community stability, strengthen resilience, reduce social fragmentation, and provide support to vulnerable populations.

This chapter examines the strategic role of faith communities as stabilizing institutions and explores how their contributions may become increasingly important in any future humanitarian emergency, recovery effort, or democratic transition.

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### **Understanding Community Stabilization**

Community stabilization refers to actions that help maintain social cohesion, public trust, and local resilience during periods of stress, uncertainty, or crisis.



Stabilization does not imply political control or governmental authority. Rather, it involves strengthening the capacity of communities to:

- Adapt to hardship.
- Resolve local problems.
- Support vulnerable individuals.
- Prevent social fragmentation.
- Maintain peaceful relationships.
- Recover from shocks.

Communities that possess strong stabilizing institutions are generally better able to withstand crises and recover more rapidly.

Faith communities often serve this role because they combine organizational capacity with moral authority and local trust.

### **Churches as Trusted Institutions**

Trust is one of the most valuable resources during a crisis.

When people lose confidence in institutions, misinformation spreads, fear increases, and social tensions often rise. Conversely, trusted institutions can help communities remain calm, organized, and resilient.

In many Cuban communities, churches have become among the most trusted institutions in society.

Several factors contribute to this trust:

#### **Long-Term Presence**

Churches remain embedded within communities regardless of changing political or economic circumstances.

#### **Personal Relationships**

Pastors, priests, lay leaders, and ministry workers often know local families personally.

#### **Service Orientation**

Churches frequently assist individuals regardless of religious affiliation, political views, or social status.

#### **Consistency**

Faith communities continue operating even during periods of hardship.

Because of these characteristics, churches often possess levels of credibility that cannot be easily replicated by external actors.

### **Providing Hope During Times of Crisis**



One of the least understood but most important contributions of faith communities is their ability to provide hope.

Prolonged humanitarian emergencies frequently produce:

- Anxiety.
- Depression.
- Isolation.
- Hopelessness.
- Social withdrawal.
- Family stress.

Material assistance alone cannot fully address these challenges.

Faith communities help individuals and families cope with hardship by providing:

- Encouragement.
- Counseling.
- Spiritual support.
- Social connection.
- Opportunities for service.
- A sense of purpose.

Many church leaders throughout Cuba report growing demand for emotional and spiritual support as economic conditions continue to deteriorate.

In many communities, churches function as centers of resilience where individuals find both practical assistance and encouragement.

### **Supporting Vulnerable Populations**

Faith communities have historically played an important role in identifying and supporting vulnerable populations.

Because churches operate at the neighborhood level, they often possess detailed knowledge of local needs.

This allows them to identify:

- Elderly persons living alone.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Chronically ill individuals.
- Single-parent households.
- Families experiencing food insecurity.
- Individuals facing mental health challenges.
- Persons displaced by disasters.

Such local knowledge is invaluable during humanitarian emergencies.



Many faith-based assistance programs prioritize vulnerable populations and maintain regular contact with individuals who may otherwise remain invisible to formal institutions.

### **Building Social Cohesion**

Periods of economic hardship can place tremendous strain on social relationships.

Competition for scarce resources may create tensions within communities. Families experience stress. Frustration may increase. Social divisions can deepen.

Faith communities help counter these tendencies by creating environments that encourage:

- Cooperation.
- Mutual assistance.
- Volunteerism.
- Reconciliation.
- Shared responsibility.

Church activities often bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds who might otherwise have limited interaction.

This social cohesion contributes directly to community resilience.

Communities characterized by trust and cooperation are generally better equipped to navigate crises than those characterized by fragmentation and mistrust.

### **Mobilizing Volunteers for Community Service**

One of the greatest strengths of Cuba's faith community is its capacity to mobilize volunteers.

Volunteer networks support a wide range of activities, including:

- Food distribution.
- Elderly care.
- Disaster response.
- Home visits.
- Community clean-up efforts.
- Medical support.
- Educational activities.
- Counseling programs.

These volunteers represent an important source of social capital. In many humanitarian emergencies, volunteer networks provide critical surge capacity before external assistance arrives.

Their contribution often determines whether local response efforts succeed or fail during the early stages of a crisis.



## Facilitating Community Communication

Accurate information becomes particularly important during emergencies.

Rumors, misinformation, and uncertainty can contribute to confusion and panic.

Because faith leaders maintain trusted relationships within their communities, they can serve as effective channels for:

- Public information.
- Emergency announcements.
- Humanitarian guidance.
- Health education.
- Resource referrals.
- Community coordination.

Trusted communication networks help communities make informed decisions and reduce the spread of harmful misinformation.

This function becomes especially valuable when formal communication systems are disrupted.

## Churches as Community Gathering Places

Physical space matters during crises.

Church facilities frequently serve as:

- Meeting locations.
- Distribution centers.
- Shelter sites.
- Counseling venues.
- Volunteer coordination hubs.
- Community support centers.

In many areas, church buildings represent some of the few community spaces capable of supporting collective action.

Their availability strengthens local preparedness and response capacity.

## Faith Communities and Conflict Mitigation

Periods of uncertainty sometimes increase tensions within communities.

Disputes may emerge regarding:

- Resource allocation.
- Humanitarian assistance.
- Local leadership.
- Community priorities.



Faith leaders often play important roles in reducing tensions and promoting peaceful solutions. Through mediation, dialogue, and community engagement, churches can help prevent disputes from escalating into broader conflicts.

This conflict mitigation function contributes significantly to community stabilization.

### **Supporting Community Resilience During Transition**

If Cuba experiences significant political, economic, or institutional change, local communities will face substantial uncertainty.

Transitions often generate:

- Administrative disruption.
- Economic instability.
- Public anxiety.
- Information gaps.
- Institutional restructuring.

Faith communities can help bridge these periods of uncertainty by providing continuity, trusted leadership, and community support. Their long-standing presence enables them to remain engaged before, during, and after major changes.

As a result, churches may serve as important anchors of stability throughout a transition process.

### **Community Stabilization During Humanitarian Emergencies**

The importance of community stabilization becomes particularly evident during major humanitarian emergencies.

Experience from disasters and crises around the world demonstrates that communities recover more effectively when local institutions remain functional.

Faith communities contribute to stabilization by:

#### **Providing Leadership**

Trusted leaders help guide community response efforts.

#### **Maintaining Social Networks**

Relationships remain intact despite disruption.

#### **Supporting Vulnerable Individuals**

At-risk populations receive attention and assistance.

#### **Mobilizing Volunteers**

Community members participate actively in recovery efforts.



### **Preserving Hope**

Psychological resilience is strengthened.

### **Facilitating Cooperation**

Communities work together to solve problems.

These functions reduce the likelihood of social breakdown and improve recovery outcomes.

## **Faith Communities and Democratic Culture**

Beyond immediate stabilization functions, faith communities can contribute to the development of democratic culture.

Many churches encourage:

- Participation.
- Service.
- Accountability.
- Ethical leadership.
- Respect for human dignity.
- Community engagement.

These values strengthen civil society and support peaceful democratic development.

Importantly, faith communities need not become political actors to contribute positively to democratic culture.

By fostering responsible citizenship, volunteerism, and community engagement, they help strengthen the social foundations upon which democratic institutions can be built.

## **Challenges and Limitations**

Faith communities are not without limitations. Challenges include:

### **Resource Constraints**

Humanitarian needs often exceed available resources.

### **Volunteer Fatigue**

Sustained crises can strain volunteer capacity.

### **Infrastructure Limitations**

Facilities vary considerably in size and condition.

### **Training Needs**

Additional preparedness training could strengthen effectiveness.



## **Expanding Demand**

Growing community needs place increasing pressure on churches.

Recognizing these limitations is important when designing preparedness and support programs. Faith communities should be viewed as critical partners rather than substitutes for broader humanitarian and institutional response efforts.

### **Strategic Implications**

The growing role of faith communities has important implications for policymakers, donors, humanitarian organizations, and development partners.

Future preparedness efforts should:

- Recognize churches as stabilizing institutions.
- Support volunteer capacity development.
- Strengthen community resilience programs.
- Expand communication and monitoring systems.
- Integrate faith-based organizations into preparedness planning.
- Build partnerships before emergencies occur.

Such investments can significantly improve humanitarian outcomes and strengthen social resilience.

### **Conclusion**

Faith communities contribute far more than humanitarian assistance.

They provide leadership, trust, resilience, hope, volunteer mobilization, communication, conflict mitigation, and community cohesion.

These functions become increasingly important as societies confront uncertainty, hardship, and change.

In Cuba, where churches maintain extensive local networks and strong community relationships, their stabilizing role may prove as important as their humanitarian role.

As policymakers and humanitarian planners consider future scenarios for Cuba, faith communities should be recognized not merely as aid distribution partners, but as essential pillars of community resilience and social stability.

## **VII. HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS AND LAST-MILE DELIVERY**

### **Overview**



The success of any humanitarian response depends not only on the availability of resources but also on the ability to move those resources efficiently from points of entry to vulnerable populations.

Food, medicines, water, hygiene supplies, shelter materials, and other relief commodities have little humanitarian value if they remain in warehouses, ports, airports, or transportation hubs. The ultimate measure of effectiveness is whether assistance reaches intended beneficiaries rapidly, safely, accountably, and equitably.

In Cuba, humanitarian distribution presents unique challenges. The island's geography, aging infrastructure, transportation constraints, fuel shortages, communications limitations, and centralized economic systems complicate relief operations. At the same time, Cuba possesses significant assets that can support distribution efforts, including established transportation corridors, port facilities, airports, faith-based networks, community organizations, and experienced local volunteers.

This chapter examines the operational requirements of humanitarian distribution and proposes a practical framework for ensuring effective last-mile delivery during a humanitarian emergency, stabilization effort, or democratic transition.

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## Why Distribution Matters

Humanitarian history demonstrates that logistics often determines success or failure. In virtually every major emergency, the greatest challenges are not procurement or funding, but distribution.

Common obstacles include:

- Damaged infrastructure.
- Limited transportation.
- Inadequate warehousing.
- Fuel shortages.
- Poor information.
- Weak coordination.
- Beneficiary identification challenges.
- Commodity diversion risks.

In Cuba, these challenges are compounded by existing economic constraints and aging infrastructure.

Consequently, preparedness planning must place significant emphasis on logistics and distribution systems.

## The Humanitarian Supply Chain



A humanitarian supply chain generally consists of five stages:

**Stage 1 – Procurement**

Acquisition of food, medicines, and relief commodities.

**Stage 2 – International Transportation**

Movement of commodities to Cuba.

**Stage 3 – Reception and Storage**

Handling at ports, airports, or other entry points.

**Stage 4 – Regional Distribution**

Movement to provincial and municipal locations.

**Stage 5 – Last-Mile Delivery**

Delivery directly to beneficiaries.

The final stage is often the most difficult and the most important.

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## Cuba's Geographic and Infrastructure Considerations

Cuba's geography presents both opportunities and challenges.

The island stretches approximately 780 miles from east to west and contains:

- Major urban centers.
- Secondary municipalities.
- Mountainous regions.
- Remote rural communities.
- Coastal populations.
- Island communities.
- 

Humanitarian planners must account for significant differences in accessibility across regions.

Key infrastructure considerations include:

**Ports**

Major maritime entry points provide opportunities for large-scale commodity shipments.

**Airports**

Airports may facilitate rapid delivery of priority humanitarian supplies.

**Highways**

Primary transportation corridors connect major population centers.

**Secondary Roads**

Many rural roads may be vulnerable to weather-related disruptions.



## **Rail Systems**

Limited but potentially useful for certain cargo movements.

Preparedness planning should include detailed mapping of transportation assets and vulnerabilities.

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## **Humanitarian Entry Points**

Any major humanitarian operation will depend upon reliable entry points. Potential entry points include:

### **International Airports**

Suitable for:

- Medical supplies.
- Emergency relief items.
- High-value commodities.

### **Seaports**

Suitable for:

- Food commodities.
- Vehicles.
- Bulk humanitarian cargo.
- Shelter materials.

Because maritime transportation is generally more cost-effective for large-scale operations, ports will likely play a central role in any major humanitarian response.

However, ports alone do not solve distribution challenges.

The real challenge begins after commodities arrive.

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## **The Last-Mile Delivery Challenge**

Last-mile delivery refers to the movement of assistance from local distribution points to individual beneficiaries.

This stage presents several operational challenges:

### **Beneficiary Identification**

Determining who should receive assistance.

### **Transportation**

Moving commodities to local communities.

### **Storage**



Maintaining temporary storage capacity.

**Distribution**

Ensuring orderly and equitable delivery.

**Monitoring**

Confirming assistance reaches intended recipients.

**Accountability**

Preventing diversion or misuse.

Many humanitarian operations fail at the last-mile stage because insufficient attention is given to local delivery systems.

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**A Decentralized Distribution Model**

This framework recommends a decentralized distribution model.

Rather than relying exclusively on centralized structures, humanitarian operations should utilize multiple layers of distribution capacity.

**National Coordination Level**

Responsible for:

- Strategic planning.
- Resource allocation.
- Coordination.

**Regional Distribution Level**

Responsible for:

- Warehousing.
- Transportation.
- Inventory management.

**Community Distribution Level**

Responsible for:

- Beneficiary engagement.
- Last-mile delivery.
- Monitoring.

This approach increases flexibility and reduces bottlenecks.

**Faith-Based Networks as Distribution Partners**



One of the most important operational advantages available in Cuba is the existence of extensive faith-based networks.

These organizations possess several characteristics that make them particularly valuable distribution partners.

**Nationwide Presence**

Churches operate in virtually every province and municipality.

**Community Trust**

Beneficiaries often trust local church leaders.

**Existing Infrastructure**

Many churches possess facilities suitable for storage and distribution.

**Volunteer Capacity**

Thousands of volunteers can support operations.

**Local Knowledge**

Church leaders understand community needs.

**Experience**

Many have decades of humanitarian distribution experience.

These characteristics make faith communities uniquely positioned to support last-mile delivery.

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**The Hybrid Distribution Model**

This paper recommends a hybrid distribution model.

Under this approach:

**Government Infrastructure**

May provide:

- Port access.
- Transportation corridors.
- Warehousing.
- Customs functions.

**Faith-Based and Community Networks**

Provide:

- Beneficiary targeting.
- Distribution management.
- Volunteer support.
- Monitoring.
- Accountability.



This model seeks to combine the strengths of available infrastructure with the trust and flexibility of local community organizations.

### **Beneficiary Identification**

One of the most sensitive aspects of humanitarian response is determining who receives assistance. Effective beneficiary targeting requires:

#### **Vulnerability Assessments**

Identification of at-risk populations.

#### **Community Input**

Engagement with local leaders.

#### **Transparency**

Clear eligibility criteria.

#### **Verification**

Reasonable procedures to confirm need.

Priority populations may include:

- Elderly persons.
- Children.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Chronically ill individuals.
- Pregnant women.
- Disaster-affected households.
- Food-insecure families.

Local churches and community organizations often possess valuable knowledge regarding vulnerable populations.

### **Community Distribution Centers**

The framework recommends establishment of Community Distribution Centers (CDCs).

Potential locations include:

- Churches.
- Parish facilities.
- Community centers.
- Schools.
- Municipal facilities.

Functions may include:

- Commodity distribution.
- Registration.



- Information sharing.
- Referral services.
- Community support activities.

Because these facilities already exist in many communities, they can be activated rapidly.

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## Warehousing and Commodity Management

Effective warehousing is essential to successful humanitarian operations.

Key requirements include:

### **Secure Storage**

Protection from theft and weather.

### **Inventory Control**

Tracking incoming and outgoing commodities.

### **Commodity Segregation**

Proper organization of supplies.

### **Documentation**

Accurate recordkeeping.

### **Distribution Planning**

Efficient movement of inventory.

Where possible, warehousing should be decentralized to reduce transportation burdens and improve responsiveness.

## Transportation Planning

Transportation is likely to represent one of the greatest operational challenges.

Potential constraints include:

- Fuel shortages.
- Vehicle shortages.
- Road conditions.
- Weather disruptions.

Preparedness planning should therefore identify:

- ✓ **Available Vehicles**
- ✓ **Fuel Sources**
- ✓ **Alternative Routes**
- ✓ **Local Transportation Partners**
- ✓ **Emergency Transportation Assets**



Flexibility will be essential.

### Monitoring and Accountability Systems

Public trust depends upon accountability. Humanitarian operations should include systems for:

#### **Distribution Tracking**

Documenting assistance provided.

#### **Beneficiary Verification**

Confirming intended recipients receive aid.

#### **Community Feedback**

Allowing beneficiaries to report concerns.

#### **Independent Monitoring**

Assessing effectiveness and integrity.

#### **Performance Evaluation**

Measuring outcomes.

These systems help ensure that resources are used appropriately.

### Technology and Humanitarian Distribution

Technology can improve efficiency but should complement—not replace—local relationships.

Potential applications include:

- Mobile reporting systems.
- Digital beneficiary records.
- GPS logistics tracking.
- Inventory management systems.
- Data dashboards.

However, planners should assume that power outages and connectivity limitations may affect technology use.

Low-tech and paper-based backup systems remain essential.

### Humanitarian Corridors and Priority Routes

Preparedness planning should identify:

- **Primary Transportation Corridors**
- **Secondary Routes**
- **Disaster Diversion Routes**
- **Priority Delivery Areas**
- **High-Risk Communities**



Mapping these assets before an emergency occurs significantly improves response effectiveness.

### Lessons from Previous Humanitarian Operations

Experience from disasters throughout the Caribbean and Latin America highlights several important lessons:

#### **Lesson 1**

Local partners are essential.

#### **Lesson 2**

Distribution systems should be established before emergencies occur.

#### **Lesson 3**

Community trust is as important as infrastructure.

#### **Lesson 4**

Decentralization increases flexibility.

#### **Lesson 5**

Accountability mechanisms strengthen public confidence.

#### **Lesson 6**

Volunteer networks provide critical surge capacity.

These lessons strongly support the inclusion of faith-based organizations within preparedness planning.

### Strategic Recommendations

To strengthen humanitarian distribution capacity in Cuba, stakeholders should:

#### **Map Existing Distribution Assets**

Identify churches, warehouses, transportation resources, and community facilities.

#### **Develop Regional Logistics Plans**

Create province-specific distribution strategies.

#### **Train Distribution Volunteers**

Strengthen local operational capacity.

#### **Establish Monitoring Systems**

Improve transparency and accountability.

#### **Conduct Tabletop Exercises**

Test distribution concepts before emergencies occur.



### **Strengthen Partnerships**

Build relationships among humanitarian, faith-based, and community actors.

Preparedness investments made today can significantly improve future outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

Humanitarian assistance is only effective when it reaches those who need it most.

In Cuba, successful distribution will depend upon a combination of infrastructure, planning, local knowledge, volunteer capacity, and trusted community relationships.

Faith-based organizations possess many of these critical assets and therefore represent essential partners in any future humanitarian response.

The evidence suggests that a decentralized, community-centered distribution model supported by strong monitoring and accountability systems offers the most practical and effective approach to last-mile delivery.

## **VIII. COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN MONITORING AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS**

### **Overview**

One of the most significant challenges facing humanitarian planners, policymakers, donors, and relief organizations working on Cuba is the limited availability of reliable, timely, and independently verified information regarding conditions on the ground.

Effective humanitarian response depends upon accurate information. Decision-makers must understand where needs exist, who is most vulnerable, what resources are available, and how conditions are changing. Without reliable information, humanitarian assistance can be delayed, misdirected, duplicated, or insufficient.

The importance of humanitarian monitoring becomes even greater in environments where official reporting systems are incomplete, delayed, politically constrained, or unable to provide detailed community-level information.

For these reasons, this paper proposes the development of a Community Humanitarian Monitoring and Early Warning System designed specifically for Cuba.

### **The objective is simple:**

*To create a trusted, community-based mechanism capable of identifying emerging humanitarian needs, tracking vulnerabilities, supporting preparedness efforts, informing*



*resource allocation, and providing early warning of deteriorating conditions before they become large-scale emergencies.*

Such a system would strengthen preparedness, improve accountability, and support more effective humanitarian response regardless of future political developments.

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## **Why Humanitarian Monitoring Matters**

Every successful humanitarian operation begins with information.

Relief organizations require answers to critical questions:

- Where are the greatest needs?
- Which populations are most vulnerable?
- Are food conditions deteriorating?
- Are medicines available?
- Are hospitals functioning?
- Are water systems operational?
- Are communities experiencing displacement?
- Are infrastructure failures increasing?
- Are local coping mechanisms being exhausted?

Without reliable answers, humanitarian actors are forced to make decisions based on assumptions rather than evidence.

This can result in:

- Delayed interventions.
- Inefficient resource allocation.
- Missed opportunities for prevention.
- Increased human suffering.

Humanitarian monitoring helps reduce uncertainty and improve decision-making.

## **Lessons from Other Humanitarian Emergencies**

Around the world, humanitarian organizations increasingly rely upon community-based monitoring systems.

Such systems have been used successfully in:

- Haiti.
- Honduras.
- Guatemala.
- El Salvador.
- Venezuela.
- Ukraine.
- Syria.

- Sudan.
- Numerous disaster-prone regions.

Experience demonstrates that local communities often recognize emerging problems long before they appear in national reporting systems.

Examples include:

- Food shortages.
- Disease outbreaks.
- Population movements.
- Infrastructure failures.
- Water shortages.
- Market disruptions.
- Community tensions.

Community-based monitoring provides a practical mechanism for capturing this information.

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### **The Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative (C-CHMI)**

This paper proposes establishment of a Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative (C-CHMI).

The initiative would operate through trained community monitors located throughout the country.

These monitors would serve as local observers and information providers rather than political actors or investigators.

Their primary responsibility would be to collect and report humanitarian information using standardized tools and procedures.

The system would be designed to support:

- Preparedness.
- Early warning.
- Humanitarian response.
- Recovery planning.
- Accountability.
- Resource allocation.

### **Core Objectives**

The proposed monitoring system would pursue six primary objectives.

#### **Objective 1**

Provide timely information regarding humanitarian conditions.

## **Objective 2**

Identify vulnerable populations.

## **Objective 3**

Support early warning and preparedness.

## **Objective 4**

Improve humanitarian accountability.

## **Objective 5**

Strengthen community resilience.

## **Objective 6**

Support evidence-based decision-making.

### **Community Humanitarian Monitors**

At the heart of the system would be Community Humanitarian Monitors (CHMs). These individuals would be trusted members of local communities.

Potential monitors may include:

- Pastors.
- Priests.
- Lay leaders.
- Teachers.
- Community volunteers.
- Healthcare workers.
- Humanitarian workers.
- Local civic leaders.

The emphasis should be on credibility, integrity, and local knowledge. Monitors would not replace existing institutions. Instead, they would serve as information conduits connecting communities with humanitarian planners and response organizations.

### **Geographic Coverage**

An effective monitoring system should be geographically representative.

Coverage should include:

#### **Urban Areas**

Major cities and densely populated neighborhoods.

#### **Secondary Municipalities**

Provincial and regional population centers.



## **Rural Communities**

Agricultural and remote areas.

## **Coastal Regions**

Areas vulnerable to hurricanes and flooding.

## **Vulnerable Communities**

Locations experiencing significant humanitarian stress.

The goal is to create visibility across the country rather than concentrating exclusively on major urban centers.

## **Information Categories**

Community monitors would collect information across several categories.

### **Food Security**

Indicators may include:

- Food availability.
- Food prices.
- Household food access.
- Market conditions.
- Nutritional concerns.
- Community feeding activities.

Monitoring food security helps identify emerging humanitarian risks before they become severe.

### **Health and Medical Conditions**

Indicators may include:

- Medicine shortages.
- Hospital functionality.
- Clinic operations.
- Disease outbreaks.
- Vulnerable patient populations.
- Availability of medical supplies.

These indicators provide insight into public health conditions.

### **Water and Sanitation**

Monitoring categories include:

- Water availability.
- Service interruptions.
- Water quality concerns.
- Sanitation conditions.
- Infrastructure failures.



Water-related challenges often serve as early indicators of broader humanitarian stress.

### **Energy and Infrastructure**

Indicators may include:

- Electrical outages.
- Fuel availability.
- Transportation disruptions.
- Communications failures.
- Infrastructure damage.

Because infrastructure problems often affect multiple sectors simultaneously, monitoring these conditions is essential.

### **Population Vulnerability**

Monitors should track:

- Elderly populations.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Chronically ill individuals.
- Children.
- Pregnant women.
- Isolated households.

Understanding vulnerability helps prioritize humanitarian assistance.

### **Migration and Displacement**

Indicators may include:

- Population departures.
- Internal displacement.
- Disaster-related movement.
- Family separation trends.

Migration often reflects broader social and economic conditions.

### **Early Warning Functions**

One of the most valuable aspects of community monitoring is its ability to provide early warning. Early warning allows decision-makers to act before conditions become emergencies.

Examples include:

#### **Food Crisis Warning**

Rapid increases in food prices or shortages.

#### **Public Health Warning**

Emerging disease outbreaks.



### **Infrastructure Warning**

Extended blackouts or water failures.

### **Disaster Warning**

Storm impacts and displacement.

### **Community Stress Warning**

Indicators of severe hardship and vulnerability.

The earlier these trends are identified, the more effectively humanitarian actors can respond.

## **Data Collection Methodology**

The monitoring system should emphasize simplicity, consistency, and reliability. Potential methods include:

### **Structured Observation**

Standardized reporting forms.

### **Community Interviews**

Conversations with local residents.

### **Key Informant Reports**

Information from trusted community leaders.

### **Facility Assessments**

Observations of clinics, markets, and community facilities.

### **Event Reporting**

Documentation of significant incidents affecting humanitarian conditions.

Data collection tools should be easy to use and adaptable to local conditions.

## **Technology Solutions**

Technology can improve monitoring efficiency. Potential tools include:

- Mobile reporting applications.
- SMS-based reporting.
- Secure messaging platforms.
- Digital dashboards.
- GIS mapping systems.

However, planners should assume periodic disruptions in:

- Electricity.
- Cellular service.



- Internet connectivity.

For this reason, low-technology backup systems remain essential. Paper forms and offline reporting mechanisms should always be available.

### Data Verification and Quality Control

Reliable information requires verification. Quality control measures may include:

#### **Multiple Source Verification**

Cross-checking reports.

#### **Regional Review**

Assessment by trained coordinators.

#### **Trend Analysis**

Identification of anomalies.

#### **Spot Verification**

Periodic validation exercises.

#### **Documentation Standards**

Consistent reporting procedures.

Strong quality assurance systems improve confidence in the data.

### Humanitarian Information Dashboard

Information collected through the monitoring system should be organized into a centralized Humanitarian Information Dashboard.

Potential dashboard categories include:

- Food security.
- Health conditions.
- Infrastructure status.
- Vulnerability mapping.
- Migration indicators.
- Disaster impacts.
- Humanitarian response activities.

The dashboard would support decision-makers by providing real-time situational awareness.

### Community Monitoring and Accountability

Monitoring systems also strengthen accountability. Benefits include:

#### **Improved Resource Allocation**

Assistance reaches areas of greatest need.



## **Transparency**

Humanitarian actors understand local conditions.

## **Performance Measurement**

Programs can be evaluated more effectively.

## **Community Participation**

Residents contribute directly to preparedness efforts.

Accountability strengthens public confidence and improves humanitarian outcomes.

## **Training Requirements**

Successful implementation requires training. Topics may include:

- Humanitarian principles.
- Observation techniques.
- Reporting procedures.
- Data quality standards.
- Ethics and confidentiality.
- Early warning indicators.
- Disaster assessment.
- Community engagement.

Training should emphasize professionalism, accuracy, and impartiality.

## **The Role of Faith Communities**

Faith communities are particularly well positioned to support humanitarian monitoring. They possess:

- Extensive geographic coverage.
- Trusted local relationships.
- Community credibility.
- Existing communication networks.
- Volunteer capacity.
- Long-term presence.

Because churches are often among the first institutions to recognize emerging community needs, they can play a vital role in early warning systems.

Their participation would significantly strengthen monitoring effectiveness.

## **Strategic Benefits**

A national community monitoring system would provide numerous benefits.

### **For Humanitarian Organizations**



Improved situational awareness.

**For Donors**

Better understanding of needs and impact.

**For Communities**

Earlier assistance and stronger resilience.

**For Policymakers**

More informed decision-making.

**For Faith-Based Organizations**

Enhanced ability to support vulnerable populations.

These benefits extend across all phases of preparedness and response.

**Strategic Recommendations**

To establish a robust monitoring system, stakeholders should:

**Establish a Pilot Program**

Begin with selected regions.

**Train Community Monitors**

Develop local capacity.

**Create Standardized Reporting Tools**

Ensure consistency.

**Develop Information Dashboards**

Improve analysis and visualization.

**Conduct Periodic Exercises**

Test procedures and systems.

**Integrate Monitoring with Preparedness Planning**

Ensure information informs action.

Preparedness is most effective when information systems are operational before emergencies occur.

**Conclusion**

Timely information saves lives.

The ability to identify emerging humanitarian needs before they become crises is one of the most valuable investments that can be made in preparedness.



A Community Humanitarian Monitoring and Early Warning System offers a practical, scalable, and community-centered approach to improving situational awareness, strengthening accountability, supporting decision-making, and enhancing resilience.

The proposed Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative provides a framework through which trusted local actors can contribute directly to humanitarian preparedness and response.

By combining local knowledge, community trust, standardized reporting, and modern information management tools, such a system can help ensure that future humanitarian efforts are informed by evidence rather than assumptions.

## **IX. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT**

### **Overview**

The United States has a unique interest in the future stability, prosperity, and humanitarian well-being of Cuba. No other nation is more directly affected by developments on the island. Cuba's proximity to the United States, combined with extensive family, cultural, economic, and historical ties, means that major developments in Cuba can rapidly generate humanitarian, migration, security, and foreign policy implications for the United States.

As discussed throughout this paper, Cuba is experiencing a multidimensional crisis characterized by economic decline, food insecurity, energy shortages, infrastructure deterioration, healthcare challenges, and unprecedented migration. While the timing and nature of future developments remain uncertain, the potential consequences of a major humanitarian emergency or political transition warrant serious preparedness efforts.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide strategic recommendations for the United States Government to enhance preparedness, strengthen humanitarian response capacity, support civil society, and promote conditions that reduce human suffering while encouraging long-term stability and democratic development.

The recommendations presented here are designed to be applicable across a range of possible scenarios, from gradual deterioration to a significant humanitarian emergency or democratic transition.

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### **Strategic Principle One: Prioritize Humanitarian Preparedness Before Crisis Occurs**

One of the most important lessons from international humanitarian operations is that preparedness saves lives.

The United States should not wait until a major emergency occurs before developing response plans. Preparedness activities should include:

- Scenario planning.



- Contingency development.
- Humanitarian logistics assessments.
- Interagency coordination.
- Partner engagement.
- Resource mapping.
- Preparedness exercises.

The cost of planning is minimal compared to the cost of responding to an unanticipated crisis.

### **Recommendation 1: Establish a Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Task Force**

The U.S. Government should establish an interagency Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Task Force.

Potential participants could include:

- Department of State.
- DHA.
- Department of Homeland Security.
- U.S. Coast Guard.
- Department of Defense.
- Department of Treasury.
- Department of Agriculture.
- Department of Health and Human Services.
- Intelligence Community.

The purpose would be to:

- Monitor developments.
- Conduct contingency planning.
- Coordinate preparedness activities.
- Support information sharing.
- Develop response frameworks.

Such a mechanism would significantly improve preparedness.

### **Recommendation 2: Develop a Cuba Humanitarian Response Framework**

The U.S. Government should prepare a comprehensive humanitarian response framework addressing:

- **Food Security**
- **Medical Assistance**
- **Water and Sanitation**
- **Shelter**
- **Logistics**
- **Migration Management**
- **Community Stabilization**
- **Recovery Planning**

The framework should identify responsibilities, resources, decision points, and coordination mechanisms before they are needed.



## **Strategic Principle Two: Strengthen Partnerships with Faith-Based Organizations**

One of the strongest conclusions emerging from this paper is the strategic importance of faith-based organizations. These organizations represent one of the most extensive and trusted networks operating throughout Cuba.

The United States should recognize faith communities as essential humanitarian partners.

### **Recommendation 3: Expand Engagement with Faith-Based Networks**

The Department of State and DHA should deepen engagement with:

- Catholic humanitarian organizations.
- Evangelical networks.
- Protestant denominations.
- Interfaith coalitions.
- International faith-based relief organizations.

Engagement should focus on:

- Humanitarian preparedness.
- Capacity development.
- Distribution planning.
- Community resilience.
- Monitoring systems.

Faith communities possess unique capabilities that can strengthen preparedness and response efforts.

### **Recommendation 4: Support Humanitarian Capacity Building**

Targeted investments should support:

- Volunteer training.
- Warehousing capacity.
- Distribution systems.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Disaster preparedness.
- Community resilience initiatives.

Relatively modest investments can significantly improve local response capacity.

## **Strategic Principle Three: Improve Situational Awareness**

Accurate information is essential for effective decision-making. Current information regarding local humanitarian conditions in Cuba remains incomplete.

### **Recommendation 5: Support Community Humanitarian Monitoring Systems**

The United States should support the development of community-based humanitarian monitoring initiatives. Potential activities include:

- Training community monitors.
- Developing reporting tools.



- Establishing early warning systems.
- Supporting data analysis platforms.
- Strengthening information-sharing networks.

Improved situational awareness enhances preparedness and accountability.

### **Recommendation 6: Establish a Cuba Humanitarian Information Dashboard**

The U.S. Government should develop a comprehensive dashboard that tracks:

- Food security.
- Healthcare indicators.
- Migration trends.
- Energy conditions.
- Infrastructure status.
- Disaster impacts.
- Humanitarian needs.

This information can support policy development and operational planning.

### **Strategic Principle Four: Prepare for Humanitarian Logistics Challenges**

Logistics will likely determine the effectiveness of any future response. Transportation, warehousing, fuel availability, and distribution systems require advance planning.

### **Recommendation 7: Conduct Humanitarian Logistics Assessments**

Assessments should identify:

- Potential entry points.
- Port capacity.
- Airport capabilities.
- Transportation corridors.
- Warehousing opportunities.
- Distribution partners.

These assessments should be updated periodically.

### **Recommendation 8: Conduct Humanitarian Distribution Exercises**

Preparedness exercises involving government agencies, humanitarian organizations, and faith-based partners should test:

- Distribution concepts.
- Coordination mechanisms.
- Communications systems.
- Resource mobilization procedures.

Exercises help identify weaknesses before emergencies occur.

### **Strategic Principle Five: Support Cuban Civil Society**

Strong civil society institutions contribute to resilience, accountability, and stability. Supporting civil society is therefore both a humanitarian and strategic investment.



### **Recommendation 9: Expand Support for Independent Civil Society**

Programs should strengthen:

- Community organizations.
- Faith-based initiatives.
- Youth leadership programs.
- Civic education efforts.
- Human rights documentation.
- Community resilience projects.

Strong civic institutions improve societal resilience.

### **Recommendation 10: Invest in Leadership Development**

Future leaders are emerging today within:

- Churches.
- Community organizations.
- Educational institutions.
- Professional associations.

Leadership development initiatives should focus on:

- Ethics.
- Community service.
- Organizational management.
- Conflict resolution.
- Civic participation.

Leadership development is one of the most important long-term investments available.

### **Strategic Principle Six: Prepare for Migration Contingencies**

Migration has historically accompanied periods of crisis in Cuba. Preparedness planning should recognize this reality.

### **Recommendation 11: Update Migration Contingency Plans**

Relevant agencies should periodically review and update plans addressing:

- Maritime migration.
- Regional migration flows.
- Humanitarian processing.
- Search and rescue operations.
- Regional coordination.

Preparedness reduces operational risks.

### **Recommendation 12: Strengthen Regional Cooperation**

The United States should expand dialogue with:

- Caribbean governments.
- Latin American partners.

- International organizations.
- Humanitarian agencies.

Migration and humanitarian challenges often require regional solutions.

### **Strategic Principle Seven: Promote Democratic Values Through Practical Support**

The promotion of democratic development is most effective when connected to practical improvements in people's lives.

#### **Recommendation 13: Support Fundamental Freedoms**

Programs should strengthen:

- Freedom of religion or belief.
- Freedom of association.
- Freedom of expression.
- Independent civil society.
- Community participation.

These freedoms contribute to long-term resilience and stability.

#### **Recommendation 14: Support Civic Education and Citizen Participation**

Future democratic development will depend upon informed and engaged citizens. Programs should encourage:

- Civic knowledge.
- Volunteerism.
- Community engagement.
- Responsible citizenship.
- Peaceful participation.

Strong democracies depend upon active citizens.

### **Strategic Principle Eight: Plan for Recovery Before Recovery Begins**

Recovery planning should begin long before a crisis reaches its peak.

#### **Recommendation 15: Develop Recovery and Stabilization Frameworks**

The U.S. Government should support planning related to:

- Economic recovery.
- Infrastructure rehabilitation.
- Agricultural revitalization.
- Institutional strengthening.
- Public administration reform.
- Workforce development.

Prepared recovery plans reduce delays and improve outcomes.

#### **Recommendation 16: Support Public-Private Partnerships**



The private sector can contribute expertise and resources in areas such as:

- Logistics.
- Telecommunications.
- Infrastructure.
- Agriculture.
- Technology.

Public-private partnerships should be integrated into preparedness planning.

### **Strategic Principle Nine: Promote Coordination Across All Stakeholders**

No single organization can respond effectively alone. Preparedness requires broad collaboration.

### **Recommendation 17: Establish a Cuba Humanitarian Coordination Forum**

The forum could include:

- Government agencies.
- Humanitarian organizations.
- Faith-based partners.
- Academic institutions.
- Donors.
- Diaspora representatives.
- Technical experts.

The objective would be preparedness, information sharing, and relationship building.

### **Recommendation 18: Conduct Annual Preparedness Reviews**

Preparedness plans should be reviewed and updated regularly. Reviews should assess:

- Emerging risks.
- Operational readiness.
- Partner capabilities.
- Lessons learned.

Preparedness is a continuous process.

### **Strategic Principle Ten: Keep Humanitarian Objectives at the Center**

Regardless of political developments, humanitarian considerations should remain a central priority. Reducing human suffering should guide preparedness and response efforts.

### **Recommendation 19: Maintain Humanitarian Principles**

All assistance efforts should be guided by:

- Humanity.
- Neutrality.
- Impartiality.
- Independence.

These principles strengthen credibility and effectiveness.

### **Recommendation 20: Focus on the Cuban People**



The ultimate objective of preparedness efforts should be improving the well-being of the Cuban people. Success should be measured by:

- Lives saved.
- Communities strengthened.
- Vulnerabilities reduced.
- Resilience increased.
- Opportunities expanded.

Humanitarian preparedness is ultimately about people, not programs.

## Conclusion

The United States possesses both a strategic interest and a humanitarian responsibility to prepare for potential future developments in Cuba.

The recommendations presented in this chapter are designed to strengthen preparedness, improve humanitarian response capacity, support civil society, encourage resilience, and reduce human suffering.

### The overarching lesson is clear:

*Preparedness cannot begin when a crisis starts. It must begin beforehand.*

By investing in planning, partnerships, monitoring systems, logistics preparedness, faith-based networks, civil society, and recovery frameworks, the United States can significantly improve its ability to respond effectively to future challenges while supporting a more stable, resilient, and prosperous future for the Cuban people.

## X. CONCLUSION

### PREPARING FOR CUBA'S FUTURE: HUMANITARIAN RESPONSIBILITY, COMMUNITY RESILIENCE, AND THE POWER OF HOPE

#### Overview

Cuba stands at a critical moment in its modern history.

The country is confronting one of the most complex combinations of humanitarian, economic, demographic, and governance challenges since the beginning of the Revolution in 1959. Food insecurity, medicine shortages, electrical grid instability, deteriorating infrastructure, transportation disruptions, declining public services, population loss through migration, and increasing social vulnerability have combined to create a situation that demands serious attention from policymakers, humanitarian organizations, faith communities, civil society leaders, donors, and the international community.

The purpose of this white paper has not been to predict the future.



History repeatedly reminds us that transitions are difficult to forecast and that countries often evolve in unexpected ways. Instead, the objective of this paper has been to assess current realities, identify potential future scenarios, examine lessons from international experience, and propose practical strategies for preparedness, humanitarian response, stabilization, recovery, and long-term development.

The central conclusion that emerges from this analysis is clear:

Regardless of what political, economic, or social path Cuba follows in the coming years, humanitarian preparedness and community resilience must become strategic priorities.

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## **Principal Findings**

Several key findings emerge from this study.

### **Finding One: Cuba Faces a Multi-Dimensional Humanitarian Crisis**

The challenges confronting Cuba extend beyond economics. The country is experiencing interconnected pressures affecting:

- Food security.
- Healthcare.
- Energy systems.
- Water and sanitation.
- Transportation.
- Public infrastructure.
- Migration.
- Social well-being.

These pressures reinforce one another and increase vulnerability throughout society.

The crisis is not limited to a single sector. It is systemic.

### **Finding Two: Humanitarian Conditions Matter Regardless of Political Outcomes**

Much discussion regarding Cuba often focuses on political developments. However, humanitarian needs exist independently of political outcomes.

Whether Cuba experiences gradual adaptation, prolonged hardship, significant reform, or democratic transition, millions of people will continue requiring:

- Food.
- Medicines.
- Healthcare.
- Community support.
- Opportunities for recovery.

Humanitarian preparedness therefore remains essential under all scenarios.

### **Finding Three: Faith Communities Represent One of Cuba's Most Important Strategic Assets**

Perhaps the most significant finding of this paper concerns the role of faith communities. Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, Mennonite, and interdenominational organizations have developed extensive networks capable of:

- Delivering humanitarian assistance.
- Supporting vulnerable populations.
- Mobilizing volunteers.
- Monitoring community conditions.
- Strengthening resilience.
- Promoting social cohesion.
- Providing hope.

In many communities, churches have become trusted institutions capable of serving as humanitarian responders and community stabilizers. This reality has profound implications for preparedness and response planning.

### **Finding Four: Civil Society Matters**

Strong communities depend upon strong civic institutions. Faith-based organizations, community groups, educational initiatives, professional associations, humanitarian networks, and local leaders all contribute to resilience.

Civil society helps communities:

- Solve problems.
- Strengthen accountability.
- Support vulnerable populations.
- Develop future leaders.
- Navigate periods of uncertainty.

Investments in civil society are therefore investments in stability.

### **Finding Five: Preparedness Is More Effective Than Reaction**

One of the clearest lessons from international experience is that preparedness saves lives. Preparedness:

- Reduces response times.
- Improves coordination.
- Strengthens resilience.
- Increases accountability.
- Reduces suffering.

The most effective humanitarian responses are built long before emergencies occur.

### **Finding Six: Local Ownership Is Essential**

No external organization can substitute for local leadership. Successful humanitarian response and recovery depend upon:

- Local knowledge.



- Local relationships.
- Local credibility.
- Local participation.

The role of international actors should be to support, strengthen, and empower local capacities rather than replace them.

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## A Vision for Preparedness

The recommendations presented throughout this paper are rooted in a simple vision: A Cuba in which communities are better prepared, more resilient, and better equipped to withstand future challenges.

This vision includes:

### **Communities**

Capable of identifying and addressing local needs.

### **Faith-Based Organizations**

Prepared to serve effectively during crises.

### **Civil Society Networks**

Strengthened and connected.

### **Humanitarian Systems**

Ready to respond rapidly.

### **Donors**

Investing strategically in preparedness and resilience.

### **Governments**

Prepared to support humanitarian objectives.

### **Citizens**

Engaged in shaping their communities and future.

Preparedness is not merely about responding to emergencies.

It is about creating conditions that allow people and communities to thrive.

---

## The Strategic Importance of Community Resilience

Resilience is one of the most important concepts explored throughout this paper.

Resilient communities possess the ability to:



- Adapt.
- Recover.
- Innovate.
- Cooperate.
- Endure hardship.

Resilience is strengthened through:

- Relationships.
- Leadership.
- Volunteerism.
- Preparedness.
- Faith.
- Civic engagement.

These qualities cannot be imported during an emergency.

They must be cultivated over time.

Fortunately, many of these strengths already exist within Cuban communities. The challenge is to support and strengthen them.

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### **The Unique Role of Faith Communities**

Throughout this white paper, faith communities have emerged as a recurring theme.

This is not accidental.

Churches and religious organizations possess characteristics that make them uniquely valuable during periods of uncertainty.

They provide:

- Trust.
- Stability.
- Service.
- Hope.
- Volunteer capacity.
- Community relationships.
- Moral leadership.
- Humanitarian assistance.

Their importance extends beyond relief distribution.

They help preserve the social fabric of communities.

They strengthen resilience.

They promote reconciliation.



They encourage service to others.

In many respects, they represent one of Cuba's most important reservoirs of social capital.

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### Hope as a Strategic Resource

Humanitarian planning often focuses on material resources.

- Food.
- Medicine.
- Transportation.
- Warehousing.
- Funding.

These resources are essential.

However, one of the most important resources discussed throughout this paper cannot be measured in tons, dollars, or inventory lists.

That resource is hope.

Communities that lose hope often struggle to recover.

Communities that maintain hope are more likely to persevere, cooperate, innovate, and rebuild.

Hope encourages resilience.

Hope inspires service.

Hope strengthens leadership.

Hope supports recovery.

Faith communities play a particularly important role in nurturing hope during difficult times.

This contribution should not be underestimated.

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### A Call to Action

The findings and recommendations contained in this paper lead to several practical conclusions.

#### **For Governments**

Invest in preparedness before emergencies occur.

#### **For Humanitarian Organizations**

Build partnerships and strengthen local capacities.

#### **For Faith Communities**

Continue serving, preparing, and leading.



**For Donors**

Support resilience, leadership, and local ownership.

**For Civil Society**

Expand engagement, collaboration, and service.

**For Academic Institutions**

Contribute research, analysis, and training.

**For Diaspora Communities**

Remain engaged in constructive and practical ways.

**For Citizens**

Invest in community, service, and hope.

Preparedness is a shared responsibility.

No single organization can accomplish these objectives alone.

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**Looking Forward**

The future of Cuba remains uncertain.

The country may experience gradual reform, continued hardship, significant transition, or a combination of these pathways.

No one can know with certainty what lies ahead.

What is certain, however, is that preparedness, resilience, and compassion will remain essential.

The recommendations presented throughout this paper are intended to help stakeholders prepare for uncertainty while remaining focused on humanitarian principles and the well-being of the Cuban people.

The ultimate objective is not merely responding to crises.

It is helping create conditions in which communities are stronger, more resilient, and better prepared for the future.

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**Final Reflection**

History teaches that nations are not defined solely by governments, institutions, or political systems.

They are defined by people.

They are defined by families, communities, faith, service, resilience, and hope.

Throughout periods of hardship, the Cuban people have demonstrated extraordinary perseverance, creativity, generosity, and strength.

Those qualities remain among the nation's greatest assets.

The humanitarian, civic, and faith-based networks described throughout this paper represent tangible expressions of that resilience.

They offer reasons for optimism even amid significant challenges.

As stakeholders consider how best to prepare for Cuba's future, they should remember a fundamental truth:

Preparedness is an act of responsibility.

Service is an act of compassion.

And hope is an act of faith.

Together, these principles provide the foundation upon which a more resilient, stable, and prosperous future can be built.

---

## Final White Paper Statement

### **The time to prepare is now.**

The greatest opportunity before governments, humanitarian organizations, faith communities, civil society leaders, donors, and citizens is not simply to respond to future crises, but to strengthen the networks, institutions, relationships, and capacities that can prevent suffering, support recovery, and help the Cuban people navigate whatever challenges and opportunities the future may bring.

That work begins today.



## ANNEXES

**Annex A** – Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Framework (Expanded CONOPS)

**Annex B** – Faith-Based Humanitarian Network Mapping by Province

**Annex C** – Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative (C-CHMI) Operational Model

**Annex D** – Humanitarian Distribution Concept of Operations (CONOPS)

**Annex E** – Humanitarian Early Warning Indicators Dashboard

**Annex F** – Updated 2026 Cuba Stability and Humanitarian Risk Assessment Matrix

**Annex G** – Recommended U.S. Government, Donor, NGO, and Faith-Based Preparedness Actions Matrix

**Annex H** – Bibliography and Source Documents

**Annex I** – Acronyms and Abbreviations

**Annex J** – Acknowledgments and Author Information



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# ANNEXES

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## Cuba Humanitarian Crisis, Stabilization, and Democratic Transition

The Strategic Role of Faith Communities, Civil Society, and Humanitarian Networks

A White Paper Prepared by Outreach Aid to the Americas (OAA)

OUTREACH AID TO THE AMERICAS

[WWW.OAAUSA.ORG](http://WWW.OAAUSA.ORG)

# ANNEXES

- Annex A** – Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Framework (Expanded CONOPS)
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# ANNEX A

## CUBA HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS FRAMEWORK

### Strategic Concept of Operations (CONOPS)

#### Preparedness, Response, Stabilization, and Recovery Framework

---

## EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

This annex presents a comprehensive Humanitarian Preparedness Framework designed to assist governments, humanitarian organizations, faith-based organizations, civil society actors, donors, academic institutions, and international partners in preparing for potential humanitarian emergencies and stabilization requirements in Cuba.

The framework recognizes that Cuba faces multiple interconnected risks, including:

- Food insecurity
- Electrical grid instability
- Healthcare deterioration
- Water and sanitation disruptions
- Infrastructure degradation
- Demographic decline
- Migration pressures
- Natural disasters
- Institutional capacity constraints

The objective of this framework is not to predict future events but to improve preparedness, reduce human suffering, strengthen resilience, and facilitate coordinated humanitarian action under a variety of possible scenarios.

---

## STRATEGIC VISION

A Cuba in which communities, institutions, faith-based organizations, humanitarian actors, and international partners possess the preparedness, resilience, coordination mechanisms, and operational capabilities necessary to reduce human suffering and support recovery during periods of crisis or transition.

---

## **STRATEGIC GOALS**

### **Goal 1**

Strengthen humanitarian preparedness.

---

### **Goal 2**

Improve situational awareness and early warning.

---

### **Goal 3**

Enhance community resilience.

---

### **Goal 4**

Strengthen humanitarian response capacity.

---

### **Goal 5**

Support stabilization and recovery.

---

### **Goal 6**

Promote local ownership and sustainability.

---

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

All preparedness and response activities should be guided by:

### **Humanity**

Reducing suffering and protecting human dignity.

## **Neutrality**

Avoiding political alignment in humanitarian operations.

## **Impartiality**

Assistance based solely on need.

## **Independence**

Humanitarian decisions free from political influence.

## **Accountability**

Responsible stewardship of resources.

## **Transparency**

Open communication and reporting.

## **Community Participation**

Active involvement of local stakeholders.

## **Resilience**

Building long-term adaptive capacity.

---

# **OPERATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS**

The framework is based on several planning assumptions:

## **Assumption 1**

Humanitarian needs are likely to continue increasing in the near term.

---

## **Assumption 2**

Conditions may deteriorate gradually or rapidly.

---

## **Assumption 3**

Multiple crises may occur simultaneously.

---

## **Assumption 4**

Faith communities will remain important humanitarian actors.

---

### **Assumption 5**

Local communities will serve as first responders.

---

### **Assumption 6**

Preparedness investments made before a crisis will improve outcomes.

---

## **HUMANITARIAN RISK ENVIRONMENT**

The principal humanitarian risks identified in Annex F include:

### **Critical Risks**

- Food insecurity
- Electrical grid failure
- Healthcare system deterioration
- Water system failure
- Institutional capacity decline
- Compound disasters

### **High Risks**

- Hurricanes
- Migration surges
- Distribution disruptions
- Public health emergencies
- Social instability

These risks form the foundation of preparedness planning.

---

## **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

The preparedness framework consists of six integrated pillars.

---

### **PILLAR I**

# HUMANITARIAN MONITORING AND EARLY WARNING

## **Objective**

Improve situational awareness.

## **Key Components**

- Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative (Annex C)
- Humanitarian Dashboard (Annex E)
- Risk Assessment Matrix (Annex F)

## **Desired Outcome**

Timely identification of humanitarian risks.

---

## **PILLAR II**

# COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

## **Objective**

Strengthen local capacity to withstand shocks.

## **Key Components**

- Volunteer development
- Preparedness education
- Vulnerability mapping
- Community leadership development

## **Desired Outcome**

Communities better able to manage crises.

---

## **PILLAR III**

# FAITH-BASED HUMANITARIAN NETWORKS

## Objective

Leverage trusted local institutions.

## Key Components

- Church preparedness plans
- Volunteer mobilization
- Humanitarian distribution sites
- Community support systems

## Desired Outcome

Expanded local response capacity.

---

## PILLAR IV

# HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

## Objective

Ensure assistance reaches vulnerable populations.

## Key Components

- Distribution CONOPS (Annex D)
- Logistics planning
- Inventory systems
- Beneficiary identification

## Desired Outcome

Effective last-mile delivery.

---

## PILLAR V

# COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

## Objective

Improve collaboration.

## Key Components

- Humanitarian coordination platforms
- Donor coordination
- Academic partnerships
- Government engagement

## Desired Outcome

Reduced duplication and improved effectiveness.

---

# PILLAR VI

# RECOVERY AND STABILIZATION

## Objective

Support long-term resilience.

## Key Components

- Community recovery
- Institutional strengthening
- Leadership development
- Economic recovery planning

## Desired Outcome

Sustainable recovery and resilience.

---

# PHASED OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

---

# PHASE I

## PREPAREDNESS

### Timeframe

Present–Crisis Onset

### Key Activities

- Monitoring
- Planning
- Training
- Mapping
- Exercises
- Capacity building

### Lead Actors

- Faith communities
  - NGOs
  - Academic institutions
  - Donors
  - Government partners
- 

# PHASE II

## ALERT AND ACTIVATION

### Timeframe

Emerging Crisis

### Trigger Events

- Food shortages
- Grid failures
- Hurricanes
- Public health emergencies
- Migration surges

### Key Activities

- Rapid assessments
  - Situation monitoring
  - Resource mobilization
  - Coordination activation
- 

## **PHASE III**

# **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

### **Timeframe**

0–6 Months

### **Priorities**

- Life-saving assistance
- Food distributions
- Medical support
- Water access
- Shelter assistance

### **Key Actors**

- Humanitarian organizations
  - Faith communities
  - Local volunteers
  - International partners
- 

## **PHASE IV**

# **STABILIZATION**

### **Timeframe**

6–24 Months

### **Priorities**

- Restore essential services
  - Strengthen communities
  - Expand local capacity
  - Reduce dependency
-

# PHASE V

## RECOVERY

### Timeframe

2–10 Years

### Priorities

- Economic recovery
  - Infrastructure rehabilitation
  - Institutional strengthening
  - Civil society development
- 

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TRIGGERS

### Trigger Level 1

Elevated Concern

Indicators:

- Increased food insecurity
- Rising blackouts
- Localized disruptions

Action:

Enhanced monitoring.

---

### Trigger Level 2

Serious Concern

Indicators:

- Multi-provincial impacts
- Healthcare deterioration
- Significant shortages

Action:

Activate preparedness measures.

---

## **Trigger Level 3**

Humanitarian Crisis

Indicators:

- Widespread humanitarian need
- Infrastructure failures
- Mass displacement

Action:

Activate response framework.

---

# **COMMAND AND COORDINATION MODEL**

## **Strategic Level**

National Coordination Group

Responsibilities:

- Policy guidance
  - Resource mobilization
  - Strategic oversight
- 

## **Operational Level**

Provincial Coordination Teams

Responsibilities:

- Planning
  - Reporting
  - Logistics coordination
- 

## **Tactical Level**

Community Response Teams

Responsibilities:

- Monitoring
  - Distribution
  - Beneficiary support
- 

## **KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

### **U.S. Government**

Potential Roles:

- Preparedness
  - Humanitarian funding
  - Technical support
- 

### **International Donors**

Potential Roles:

- Funding
  - Capacity building
  - Recovery support
- 

### **Humanitarian Organizations**

Potential Roles:

- Program implementation
  - Assessments
  - Logistics
- 

### **Faith-Based Organizations**

Potential Roles:

- Monitoring
  - Distribution
  - Volunteer mobilization
- 

### **Academic Institutions**

Potential Roles:

- Research
  - Training
  - Analysis
- 

## **Diaspora Communities**

Potential Roles:

- Technical expertise
  - Resource mobilization
  - Recovery support
- 

# **RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

## **Human Resources**

- Monitors
  - Volunteers
  - Coordinators
  - Trainers
- 

## **Physical Resources**

- Warehouses
  - Transportation assets
  - Communications systems
- 

## **Information Resources**

- Dashboards
  - Mapping systems
  - Reporting platforms
- 

## **Financial Resources**

- Preparedness funding
  - Emergency response funding
  - Recovery investments
- 

# **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

## **Preparedness Indicators**

- Monitors trained
  - Volunteers trained
  - Plans completed
  - Exercises conducted
- 

## **Response Indicators**

- Beneficiaries served
  - Distribution effectiveness
  - Response times
- 

## **Recovery Indicators**

- Communities stabilized
  - Local capacity strengthened
  - Recovery initiatives implemented
- 

# **STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

Successful implementation of this framework should result in:

**Improved Preparedness**

**Faster Humanitarian Response**

**Better Situational Awareness**

**Stronger Community Resilience**

**More Effective Distribution Systems**

**Stronger Faith-Based Partnerships**

**Enhanced Coordination**

**Sustainable Recovery**

---

# **CONCLUSION**

Preparedness is not a single program, project, or institution.

It is a process of building relationships, strengthening communities, improving information systems, developing response capabilities, and fostering resilience before crises occur.

The Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Framework integrates monitoring, faith-based networks, humanitarian distribution, coordination mechanisms, donor engagement, and recovery planning into a unified strategy capable of supporting communities during periods of uncertainty and change.

The framework recognizes that while future events cannot be predicted, preparedness can be strengthened.

The ultimate objective is to ensure that when future challenges emerge, communities, institutions, humanitarian actors, and partners are ready to respond effectively, reduce suffering, preserve dignity, and support recovery.

---

## **Annex A Strategic Principle**

**Preparedness is the bridge between uncertainty and resilience.**

Communities that prepare together are better able to respond together, recover together, and build a stronger future together.

# **ANNEX B**

## **FAITH-BASED HUMANITARIAN NETWORK MAPPING BY PROVINCE**

### **Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness, Distribution, and Community Resilience Framework**

#### **Purpose**

This annex provides a preliminary mapping framework of major faith-based networks operating throughout Cuba that may contribute to humanitarian preparedness, community monitoring, emergency response, community stabilization, and recovery activities.

The purpose of this annex is not to provide an exhaustive directory of religious organizations, but rather to identify the broad faith-based infrastructure that exists across the country and that may serve as a valuable humanitarian asset during periods of crisis or transition.

The mapping framework supports:

- Humanitarian preparedness
- Community monitoring
- Vulnerability identification
- Humanitarian distribution
- Volunteer mobilization
- Disaster response
- Community resilience
- Recovery planning

---

## **STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF FAITH COMMUNITIES**

Faith communities represent one of the most extensive and geographically dispersed social networks in Cuba.

Key strengths include:

## **Geographic Presence**

Urban, suburban, and rural coverage.

## **Community Trust**

Long-standing relationships with local residents.

## **Volunteer Capacity**

Established culture of service.

## **Existing Infrastructure**

Church buildings, meeting spaces, transportation assets, and communication networks.

## **Community Knowledge**

Awareness of vulnerable populations and local needs.

## **Stability**

Consistent presence during periods of hardship and uncertainty.

Because of these strengths, faith communities may serve as essential partners in humanitarian preparedness and response efforts.

---

# **NATIONAL FAITH-BASED NETWORK STRUCTURE**

## **Category I**

### **Catholic Church Network**

Potential Assets:

- Dioceses
- Parishes
- Religious orders
- Lay ministries
- Caritas-related activities
- Community outreach programs

Potential Roles:

- Humanitarian distribution
- Vulnerability identification

- Community support
  - Volunteer mobilization
- 

## **Category II**

### **Protestant Denominations**

Potential Networks:

- Baptist
- Methodist
- Presbyterian
- Episcopal
- Lutheran
- Mennonite

Potential Roles:

- Community outreach
  - Monitoring activities
  - Volunteer mobilization
  - Humanitarian distribution
- 

## **Category III**

### **Evangelical and Pentecostal Networks**

Potential Networks:

- Assemblies of God
- Independent Evangelical Churches
- Pentecostal Fellowships
- Non-denominational Churches

Potential Roles:

- Community support
  - Disaster response
  - Volunteer mobilization
  - Humanitarian assistance
- 

## **Category IV**

### **Independent and Community Churches**

Potential Roles:

- Neighborhood-level outreach
  - Community monitoring
  - Last-mile distribution
  - Vulnerability identification
- 

# PROVINCIAL HUMANITARIAN MAPPING FRAMEWORK

## Province 1

### Pinar del Río

Population Characteristics:

- Agricultural communities
- Hurricane-prone region
- Rural populations

Potential Faith-Based Assets:

- Catholic parishes
- Baptist churches
- Methodist congregations
- Evangelical fellowships

Potential Humanitarian Functions:

- Community monitoring
  - Disaster preparedness
  - Food distribution
- 

## Province 2

### Artemisa

Population Characteristics:

- Mixed urban-rural population
- Agricultural production

Potential Faith-Based Assets:

- Catholic networks
- Protestant congregations
- Community churches

Potential Functions:

- Community resilience activities
  - Humanitarian outreach
- 

## **Province 3**

### **Havana**

Population Characteristics:

- Largest urban population
- High population density
- Major transportation hub

Potential Faith-Based Assets:

- National religious leadership structures
- Large congregations
- Educational institutions
- Community ministries

Potential Functions:

- National coordination
  - Humanitarian logistics
  - Volunteer mobilization
  - Monitoring and reporting
- 

## **Province 4**

### **Mayabeque**

Potential Roles:

- Community outreach
  - Monitoring activities
  - Distribution support
- 

## **Province 5**

### **Matanzas**

Population Characteristics:

- Tourism sector
- Urban and rural communities

Potential Functions:

- Humanitarian monitoring
  - Volunteer mobilization
- 

## **Province 6**

### **Cienfuegos**

Potential Functions:

- Community support programs
  - Disaster preparedness
- 

## **Province 7**

### **Villa Clara**

Potential Functions:

- Regional coordination
  - Community monitoring
  - Distribution support
- 

## **Province 8**

### **Sancti Spíritus**

Potential Functions:

- Rural outreach
  - Vulnerability identification
- 

## **Province 9**

### **Ciego de Ávila**

Potential Functions:

- Disaster preparedness
  - Community resilience activities
-

## **Province 10**

### **Camagüey**

Population Characteristics:

- Large geographic area
- Agricultural communities

Potential Functions:

- Regional distribution support
  - Monitoring activities
- 

## **Province 11**

### **Las Tunas**

Potential Functions:

- Rural humanitarian outreach
  - Volunteer mobilization
- 

## **Province 12**

### **Holguín**

Population Characteristics:

- Significant population center
- Urban and rural communities

Potential Functions:

- Distribution support
  - Community monitoring
  - Humanitarian coordination
- 

## **Province 13**

### **Granma**

Potential Functions:

- Rural outreach
- Disaster response support

---

## **Province 14**

### **Santiago de Cuba**

Population Characteristics:

- Major population center
- Significant faith-based presence
- Hurricane vulnerability

Potential Functions:

- Regional humanitarian hub
  - Volunteer mobilization
  - Distribution operations
- 

## **Province 15**

### **Guantánamo**

Population Characteristics:

- Remote communities
- Disaster vulnerability

Potential Functions:

- Monitoring
  - Community outreach
  - Humanitarian support
- 

## **Special Municipality**

### **Isla de la Juventud**

Potential Functions:

- Specialized humanitarian planning
  - Community monitoring
- 

# **PROPOSED HUMANITARIAN HUB MODEL**

## **National Humanitarian Coordination Nodes**

Potential locations:

## **Havana**

National Coordination

## **Santiago de Cuba**

Eastern Regional Hub

## **Camagüey**

Central Regional Hub

## **Holguín**

Eastern Support Hub

## **Santa Clara**

Central-Western Support Hub

These hubs would support:

- Information sharing
- Volunteer coordination
- Humanitarian logistics
- Community monitoring

---

# **COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN MONITORING NETWORK**

Faith communities may provide the foundation for:

## **Community Humanitarian Monitors (CHMs)**

Potential monitor sources:

- Pastors
- Priests
- Lay leaders
- Women's ministry leaders
- Youth leaders
- Community volunteers

Potential Benefits:

- Local knowledge
  - Community trust
  - Existing communication systems
- 

# **HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION CAPACITY**

Potential Distribution Assets:

**Churches**

**Parish Facilities**

**Community Centers**

**Ministry Facilities**

**Educational Facilities**

**Faith-Based Warehouses**

These locations may serve as:

- Distribution sites
  - Volunteer coordination centers
  - Information collection points
  - Community assistance hubs
- 

# **VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION FRAMEWORK**

Potential Volunteer Functions:

**Commodity Distribution**

**Vulnerability Assessments**

**Community Monitoring**

**Home Visits**

**Disaster Response**

**Communications Support**

**Data Collection**

**Community Outreach**

---

# **VULNERABLE POPULATION IDENTIFICATION**

Faith communities are often uniquely positioned to identify:

- Elderly individuals
- Persons with disabilities
- Chronically ill persons
- Single-parent households
- Isolated families
- Disaster-affected populations

This capability significantly improves humanitarian targeting.

---

# **INFORMATION FLOW MODEL**

Community Members

↓

Church Leadership

↓

Community Humanitarian Monitor

↓

Municipal Coordinator

↓

Provincial Coordinator

↓

National Dashboard

This structure supports Annex C (C-CHMI) and Annex E (Humanitarian Dashboard).

---

# CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Recommended investments include:

**Preparedness Training**

**Humanitarian Monitoring Training**

**Volunteer Development**

**Logistics Training**

**Accountability Systems**

**Disaster Preparedness Education**

**Leadership Development**

**Community Resilience Programming**

---

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

**Number of Faith-Based Partners Engaged**

**Number of Active Community Monitors**

**Number of Trained Volunteers**

**Number of Distribution Sites Identified**

**Provincial Coverage Achieved**

**Vulnerable Households Identified**

**Preparedness Activities Conducted**

---

## IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

### Phase I

Mapping and Assessment

- Identify faith-based partners
- Conduct capacity assessments
- Develop provincial maps

---

## **Phase II**

Preparedness Development

- Training
- Planning
- Network development

---

## **Phase III**

Operational Readiness

- Monitoring activation
- Volunteer mobilization
- Distribution preparedness

---

## **Phase IV**

Response and Recovery

- Humanitarian operations
- Community stabilization
- Recovery support

---

# **LIMITATIONS**

This annex is intended as a planning framework rather than a definitive census of faith-based organizations.

Actual capacities, locations, leadership structures, and operational readiness should be verified through periodic field assessments and partner consultations.

Faith-based networks evolve over time, and mapping should be updated regularly.

---

# **CONCLUSION**

Faith communities represent one of the most significant humanitarian assets available throughout Cuba.

Their geographic reach, trusted relationships, volunteer capacity, community knowledge, and long-term presence position them as indispensable partners in preparedness, humanitarian response, community resilience, and recovery efforts.

By strengthening relationships, expanding preparedness activities, and integrating faith-based networks into broader humanitarian planning frameworks, stakeholders can significantly improve their ability to respond effectively to future challenges while reducing human suffering and strengthening community resilience.

---

## **Annex B Key Principle**

**The strongest humanitarian network is often the one that already exists within the community.**

Faith communities provide not only buildings and volunteers, but also trust, relationships, local knowledge, and hope—the foundations upon which effective humanitarian response and community resilience are built.

# ANNEX C

## CUBA COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN MONITORING INITIATIVE (C-CHMI)

### Operational Framework for Community-Based Humanitarian Monitoring, Early Warning, and Situational Awareness

#### Purpose

The Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative (C-CHMI) is a proposed nationwide network of trained Community Humanitarian Monitors (CHMs) designed to provide timely, reliable, and community-based information regarding humanitarian conditions throughout Cuba.

The initiative is intended to support:

- Humanitarian preparedness
- Early warning
- Situational awareness
- Vulnerability identification
- Disaster preparedness
- Humanitarian response
- Community resilience
- Recovery planning

The system is designed to function as a non-political, humanitarian information network focused exclusively on community conditions and humanitarian needs.

---

## VISION

To establish a trusted, community-based humanitarian monitoring network capable of providing timely and actionable information that supports preparedness, reduces human suffering, strengthens resilience, and improves humanitarian response throughout Cuba.

---

## MISSION

To train, equip, and support community-based humanitarian monitors who collect, verify, and report information regarding humanitarian conditions, vulnerabilities, emerging risks, and community needs using standardized procedures and ethical humanitarian principles.

---

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

### **Objective 1**

Improve humanitarian situational awareness.

---

### **Objective 2**

Strengthen early warning capacity.

---

### **Objective 3**

Support evidence-based decision-making.

---

### **Objective 4**

Improve targeting of humanitarian assistance.

---

### **Objective 5**

Strengthen community resilience.

---

### **Objective 6**

Support preparedness planning.

---

## **CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

The C-CHMI operates through a multi-tier structure that links local communities to municipal, provincial, and national humanitarian information systems.

Community Humanitarian Monitor



Municipal Coordinator



Provincial Coordinator



National Analysis Center



Humanitarian Dashboard



Decision Makers and Partners

---

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## Tier 1

### **Community Humanitarian Monitor (CHM)**

The foundation of the system.

Monitors are trusted local individuals trained to observe and report humanitarian conditions.

Potential candidates include:

- Pastors
  - Priests
  - Lay leaders
  - Teachers
  - Community volunteers
  - Healthcare workers
  - Civic leaders
  - Social workers
- 

## Tier 2

### **Municipal Humanitarian Coordinator**

Responsibilities:

- Review reports
  - Verify information
  - Support monitors
  - Consolidate municipal data
  - Identify emerging trends
- 

## **Tier 3**

### **Provincial Humanitarian Coordinator**

Responsibilities:

- Analyze provincial conditions
  - Coordinate reporting
  - Validate trends
  - Produce provincial summaries
- 

## **Tier 4**

### **National Humanitarian Analysis Center**

Responsibilities:

- Dashboard management
  - Risk assessment
  - Trend analysis
  - Early warning alerts
  - National reporting
- 

# **INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION MODEL**

## **Pilot Phase**

**10 Lead Community Humanitarian Monitors**

Receive intensive training.

These individuals become Master Trainers.

---

## **Expansion Phase**

Each Lead Monitor trains:

10–20 additional monitors.

Result:

100–200 monitors nationwide.

---

## **Full Implementation Phase**

Potential national network:

300–500 trained monitors.

Coverage:

All provinces.

Urban and rural areas.

Faith-based and community networks.

---

# **COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN MONITOR PROFILE**

Successful monitors should demonstrate:

**Integrity**

**Community Trust**

**Reliability**

**Communication Skills**

**Commitment to Service**

**Objectivity**

**Respect for Confidentiality**

Technical expertise is less important than credibility and commitment.

---

# **HUMANITARIAN INFORMATION CATEGORIES**

## **Category 1**

### **Food Security**

Indicators include:

- Food availability
  - Food prices
  - Community feeding needs
  - Household food access
  - Vulnerable populations
- 

## **Category 2**

### **Healthcare**

Indicators include:

- Medicine shortages
  - Hospital functionality
  - Health emergencies
  - Vulnerable patients
  - Public health concerns
- 

## **Category 3**

### **Water and Sanitation**

Indicators include:

- Water service interruptions
- Water quality concerns

- Sanitation conditions
  - Infrastructure failures
- 

## **Category 4**

### **Energy and Infrastructure**

Indicators include:

- Blackouts
  - Fuel shortages
  - Transportation disruptions
  - Communications challenges
- 

## **Category 5**

### **Community Vulnerability**

Indicators include:

- Elderly populations
  - Persons with disabilities
  - Children at risk
  - Isolated households
  - Families in crisis
- 

## **Category 6**

### **Migration and Population Movement**

Indicators include:

- Community departures
  - Family separation
  - Internal displacement
-

## **Category 7**

### **Disaster Impacts**

Indicators include:

- Hurricane damage
  - Flooding
  - Infrastructure damage
  - Community recovery needs
- 

## **DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

### **Structured Observation**

Monitors document observed conditions.

---

### **Community Interviews**

Informal conversations with residents.

---

### **Key Informant Discussions**

Information from trusted community leaders.

---

### **Facility Assessments**

Observation of:

- Markets
  - Clinics
  - Pharmacies
  - Community facilities
- 

### **Event Reporting**

Documentation of significant humanitarian incidents.

---

# REPORTING FREQUENCY

## Routine Monitoring

Weekly reporting.

---

## Elevated Risk Conditions

Twice-weekly reporting.

---

## Humanitarian Emergencies

Daily reporting.

---

## Major Disasters

Real-time reporting when feasible.

---

# EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

The initiative supports a five-level warning system.

Level	Status
1	Stable
2	Elevated Concern
3	Significant Concern
4	Crisis
5	Emergency

Alerts are generated when conditions exceed established thresholds.

---

# TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

Preferred tools may include:

## Mobile Reporting Applications

## Secure Messaging Platforms

**SMS Reporting**

**Offline Data Collection Tools**

**GIS Mapping Systems**

**Humanitarian Dashboards**

Because power and internet access may be unreliable, all systems should include low-tech backup procedures.

---

## **DATA VERIFICATION**

Verification procedures include:

**Cross-Checking Sources**

**Municipal Review**

**Provincial Validation**

**Trend Analysis**

**Spot Verification**

**Independent Confirmation**

Verification improves reliability and confidence.

---

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

All participants must adhere to:

**Accuracy**

**Confidentiality**

**Respect**

**Neutrality**

**Impartiality**

**Humanitarian Focus**

The initiative is designed to identify humanitarian needs rather than engage in political activity.

---

# **TRAINING PROGRAM**

## **Core Curriculum**

### **Module 1**

Introduction to Humanitarian Principles

---

### **Module 2**

Community Monitoring Fundamentals

---

### **Module 3**

Humanitarian Indicators

---

### **Module 4**

Data Collection Techniques

---

### **Module 5**

Reporting Procedures

---

### **Module 6**

Ethics and Confidentiality

---

### **Module 7**

Disaster Assessment

---

### **Module 8**

Community Resilience

---

# **PROPOSED LEAD MONITOR TRAINING**

## **Duration**

Two Weeks

---

## **Training Hours**

80 Hours

---

## **Suggested Host**

Florida International University

CIFAL Miami

Partner Humanitarian Organizations

---

## **Training Components**

- Classroom instruction
  - Practical exercises
  - Field simulations
  - Reporting exercises
  - Dashboard familiarization
  - Tabletop scenarios
- 

# **HUMANITARIAN DASHBOARD INTEGRATION**

Information collected through C-CHMI feeds directly into:

### **Annex E**

Humanitarian Early Warning Dashboard

and

### **Annex F**

Humanitarian Risk Assessment Matrix

This creates a complete preparedness ecosystem.

---

## **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

### **Operational Indicators**

- Monitors trained
  - Active reporting locations
  - Reports submitted
  - Provinces covered
- 

### **Information Quality Indicators**

- Reporting timeliness
  - Verification rate
  - Accuracy rate
  - Dashboard utilization
- 

### **Preparedness Indicators**

- Early warnings generated
  - Risks identified
  - Preparedness actions initiated
- 

## **IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE**

### **Phase I**

Design and Pilot

Months 1–6

---

### **Phase II**

Provincial Expansion

Months 7–18

---

## **Phase III**

National Coverage

Months 19–36

---

# **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

## **For Communities**

Earlier identification of needs.

---

## **For Faith Communities**

Improved ability to serve vulnerable populations.

---

## **For Humanitarian Organizations**

Improved situational awareness.

---

## **For Donors**

Better resource allocation.

---

## **For Policymakers**

Evidence-based decision-making.

---

# **STRATEGIC VALUE**

The greatest benefit of the C-CHMI is that it transforms isolated community observations into actionable humanitarian intelligence.

Rather than reacting after conditions deteriorate, stakeholders gain the ability to identify risks, monitor trends, and respond proactively.

Preparedness becomes preventive rather than reactive.

---

# CONCLUSION

The Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative represents a practical, scalable, and sustainable approach to strengthening humanitarian preparedness and resilience.

By leveraging trusted local leaders, faith communities, community volunteers, and modern information systems, the initiative creates a bridge between local realities and strategic decision-making.

The system is designed to support humanitarian principles, strengthen community resilience, improve accountability, and provide the timely information necessary to reduce human suffering and improve preparedness throughout Cuba.

---

## Annex C Key Principle

**The community sees first what the nation sees later.**

The purpose of the C-CHMI is to ensure that local observations become actionable information before humanitarian problems become humanitarian crises.

# **ANNEX D**

## **HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS (CONOPS)**

### **Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness, Response, and Stabilization Framework**

#### **Purpose**

This annex provides a proposed Humanitarian Distribution Concept of Operations (CONOPS) for delivering humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations throughout Cuba during a major humanitarian emergency, natural disaster, infrastructure failure, economic collapse, or political transition.

The CONOPS is designed to support:

- Food assistance
- Medical assistance
- Water and sanitation support
- Emergency relief commodities
- Community stabilization activities
- Recovery operations

The framework emphasizes:

- Humanitarian principles
- Accountability
- Local ownership
- Faith-based partnerships
- Community resilience
- Rapid response capability

---

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide timely, accountable, transparent, and equitable distribution of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable populations throughout Cuba through a coordinated network of local faith-based organizations, civil society partners, community volunteers, humanitarian organizations, and supporting governmental and international partners.

---

## **OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

All humanitarian operations should be guided by:

### **Humanity**

Reducing suffering and preserving human dignity.

### **Neutrality**

Assistance provided without political alignment.

### **Impartiality**

Assistance based upon need.

### **Independence**

Humanitarian decision-making free from political influence.

### **Accountability**

Responsible stewardship of resources.

### **Transparency**

Open reporting and monitoring procedures.

### **Community Participation**

Beneficiaries engaged in planning and implementation.

---

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

### **Objective 1**

Deliver life-saving humanitarian assistance.

---

### **Objective 2**

Support vulnerable populations.

---

### **Objective 3**

Prevent humanitarian deterioration.

---

### **Objective 4**

Strengthen community resilience.

---

### **Objective 5**

Support stabilization and recovery.

---

## **HUMANITARIAN DISTRIBUTION MODEL**

### **Five-Tier Distribution Structure**

#### **Tier 1**

##### **International Supply Sources**

Sources may include:

- U.S. Government commodities
- International donor contributions
- Faith-based humanitarian organizations
- Private-sector donations
- International relief agencies

Examples:

- Food commodities
- Medicines
- Water treatment supplies
- Hygiene kits
- Shelter materials

---

## **Tier 2**

### **Regional Logistics Hubs**

Potential staging locations:

- Miami
- Dominican Republic
- Puerto Rico
- Jamaica
- Other regional facilities

Functions:

- Commodity consolidation
- Quality control
- Inventory management
- Transportation planning

---

## **Tier 3**

### **National Entry Points**

Potential access points:

- Maritime ports
- Airports
- Humanitarian corridors
- Authorized distribution channels

Functions:

- Customs processing
  - Commodity inspection
  - Initial warehousing
  - Distribution scheduling
-

## **Tier 4**

### **Provincial Distribution Centers**

Functions:

- Regional storage
- Inventory management
- Volunteer coordination
- Transportation coordination
- Reporting

Potential facilities:

- Church compounds
  - Community centers
  - Warehouses
  - Humanitarian facilities
- 

## **Tier 5**

### **Community Distribution Sites**

Final distribution points.

Potential locations:

- Churches
- Parish facilities
- Community centers
- Schools
- Local humanitarian centers

These locations represent the "last mile" of delivery.

---

# **PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION FLOW**

International Suppliers



Regional Logistics Hub



National Reception Facility



Provincial Distribution Center



Municipal Distribution Site



Community Distribution Point



Beneficiary Household

---

## **ROLE OF FAITH-BASED NETWORKS**

### **Strategic Advantage**

Faith communities provide:

- Existing infrastructure
- Trusted leadership
- Volunteer capacity
- Geographic coverage
- Community knowledge
- Beneficiary identification capability
- Accountability support

---

### **Potential Distribution Partners**

#### **Catholic Networks**

Parishes, dioceses, and humanitarian ministries.

---

## **Protestant Denominations**

Regional and local congregations.

---

## **Evangelical Networks**

Community-based ministries.

---

## **Independent Churches**

Neighborhood-level distribution partners.

---

# **BENEFICIARY TARGETING FRAMEWORK**

## **Priority Group 1**

### **Elderly Individuals**

Particularly those living alone.

---

## **Priority Group 2**

### **Persons with Disabilities**

---

## **Priority Group 3**

### **Households with Young Children**

---

## **Priority Group 4**

### **Pregnant and Nursing Mothers**

---

## **Priority Group 5**

### **Chronically Ill Individuals**

---

## **Priority Group 6**

## Households Experiencing Extreme Food Insecurity

---

### Priority Group 7

#### Disaster-Affected Populations

---

## **BENEFICIARY IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

Community Humanitarian Monitors

↓

Church Leadership

↓

Community Verification Team

↓

Municipal Distribution Coordinator

↓

Final Beneficiary List

This process improves accountability and transparency.

---

## **ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

### **Distribution Documentation**

Each distribution should document:

- Commodity type
  - Quantity distributed
  - Date
  - Distribution location
  - Beneficiary count
  - Volunteer participation
-

## **Inventory Controls**

Maintain:

- Warehouse logs
  - Delivery receipts
  - Distribution records
  - Stock balances
  - Exception reports
- 

## **Community Verification**

Independent verification through:

- Community leaders
  - Church representatives
  - Volunteer monitors
  - Beneficiary feedback
- 

## **COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SYSTEM**

Beneficiaries should have opportunities to:

- Report concerns
- Provide feedback
- Identify unmet needs
- Suggest improvements

Methods may include:

- Community meetings
  - SMS reporting
  - Hotline systems
  - Local feedback committees
-

# **DISTRIBUTION SCENARIOS**

## **Scenario A**

### **Localized Humanitarian Crisis**

Response Area:

Single municipality or province.

Primary Actors:

Local churches and NGOs.

---

## **Scenario B**

### **Multi-Provincial Emergency**

Response Area:

Several provinces.

Primary Actors:

National coordination system.

Regional logistics support.

---

## **Scenario C**

### **Nationwide Humanitarian Emergency**

Response Area:

Entire country.

Primary Actors:

International humanitarian response.

National coordination mechanism.

Faith-based distribution network.

---

## **Scenario D**

## **Post-Hurricane Response**

Response Area:

Disaster-affected provinces.

Priority Commodities:

- Food
  - Water
  - Hygiene supplies
  - Shelter materials
  - Medical assistance
- 

# **HUMANITARIAN COMMODITIES**

## **Food Assistance**

Examples:

- Fortified lentils
  - Rice
  - Beans
  - Vegetable oil
  - Shelf-stable protein
  - Nutritional supplements
- 

## **Medical Supplies**

Examples:

- Essential medicines
  - Medical consumables
  - First-aid supplies
  - Public health materials
-

## **WASH Supplies**

Examples:

- Water purification tablets
  - Hygiene kits
  - Soap
  - Sanitation supplies
- 

## **Shelter Materials**

Examples:

- Tarps
  - Repair kits
  - Emergency household supplies
- 

# **LOGISTICS REQUIREMENTS**

## **Transportation Assets**

Potential resources:

- Trucks
  - Vans
  - Small commercial vehicles
  - Boats
  - Community transport assets
- 

## **Warehousing**

Minimum requirements:

- Secure storage
- Inventory controls
- Accessibility

- Environmental protection
- 

## **Communications**

Required capabilities:

- Mobile phones
  - Satellite communications (if available)
  - Radio systems
  - Internet-based reporting
- 

## **HUMANITARIAN INFORMATION FLOW**

Community Humanitarian Monitor

↓

Municipal Coordinator

↓

Provincial Coordinator

↓

National Coordination Center

↓

Donors / Humanitarian Partners

↓

Decision Makers

---

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

### **Operational Metrics**

- Commodities delivered
- Beneficiaries served
- Distribution sites activated

- Volunteers mobilized
  - Response times
- 

## **Accountability Metrics**

- Inventory reconciliation rate
  - Distribution verification rate
  - Beneficiary satisfaction
  - Complaint resolution rate
- 

## **Community Resilience Metrics**

- Volunteer participation
  - Community engagement
  - Local partner involvement
  - Recovery initiatives launched
- 

# **RISK MITIGATION MEASURES**

## **Diversify Distribution Channels**

Avoid overreliance on single systems.

---

## **Decentralize Warehousing**

Reduce vulnerability to disruptions.

---

## **Train Backup Personnel**

Maintain operational continuity.

---

## **Strengthen Monitoring**

Improve accountability.

---

# Conduct Preparedness Exercises

Identify weaknesses before emergencies occur.

---

## IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

### Phase I

Preparedness

- Mapping
  - Training
  - Planning
  - Relationship building
- 

### Phase II

Activation

- Assessments
  - Resource mobilization
  - Distribution startup
- 

### Phase III

Sustained Operations

- Full-scale distributions
  - Monitoring
  - Reporting
- 

### Phase IV

Recovery

- Transition to recovery programming
  - Capacity strengthening
  - Community resilience initiatives
- 

## CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in Cuba will depend not only on the availability of resources but also on the existence of trusted distribution systems capable of reaching vulnerable populations rapidly, transparently, and accountably.

Faith-based organizations, community volunteers, civil society groups, humanitarian partners, and local leaders possess unique strengths that can contribute significantly to these efforts.

The distribution framework presented in this annex provides a practical model for preparedness, response, stabilization, and recovery activities. Its success will depend upon planning, partnership, accountability, community participation, and a shared commitment to reducing human suffering while preserving human dignity.

---

## **Annex D Key Concept**

**The last mile is the most important mile.**

Humanitarian assistance only achieves its purpose when it successfully reaches the individual, family, or community in need. Effective preparedness therefore requires not only securing resources but also building trusted networks capable of delivering those resources where they are needed most.

# ANNEX E

## CUBA HUMANITARIAN EARLY WARNING INDICATORS DASHBOARD

### Community Humanitarian Monitoring and Early Warning System (C-CHMI)

#### Purpose

This annex provides a proposed Humanitarian Early Warning Indicators Dashboard for monitoring humanitarian conditions throughout Cuba.

The dashboard is designed to support:

- Situational awareness
- Humanitarian preparedness
- Early warning analysis
- Resource allocation
- Vulnerability assessments
- Humanitarian response planning
- Stabilization and recovery efforts

The framework utilizes a color-coded warning system that allows decision-makers to identify deteriorating conditions before they become humanitarian emergencies.

---

## EARLY WARNING STATUS LEVELS

Status	Condition	Meaning
GREEN	Stable	Conditions within normal range
YELLOW	Elevated Concern	Situation worsening; increased monitoring required
ORANGE	Serious Concern	Humanitarian intervention planning recommended
RED	Crisis	Immediate humanitarian response required
BLACK	Catastrophic	Large-scale emergency response required

---

## DASHBOARD CATEGORY I

# FOOD SECURITY

## Key Question:

Can families reliably access sufficient food?

### Indicator 1.1

Food Availability in Local Markets

Status	Condition
Green	Most food categories available
Yellow	Frequent shortages of basic staples
Orange	Severe shortages affecting multiple food groups
Red	Food available only intermittently
Black	Widespread food unavailability

---

### Indicator 1.2

Food Price Inflation

Status	Condition
Green	Less than 10% quarterly increase
Yellow	10–25% increase
Orange	25–50% increase
Red	50–100% increase
Black	Greater than 100% increase

---

### Indicator 1.3

Community Feeding Requests

Status	Condition
Green	Isolated requests
Yellow	Increasing requests
Orange	Frequent requests across communities
Red	Widespread dependence on assistance
Black	Community feeding programs overwhelmed

---

## DASHBOARD CATEGORY II

# HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

## Key Question:

Can vulnerable populations access basic healthcare services?

### Indicator 2.1

Essential Medicine Availability

Status	Condition
Green	Most medicines available
Yellow	Periodic shortages
Orange	Multiple critical shortages
Red	Severe shortages affecting patient care
Black	Systemic medicine shortages nationwide

---

### Indicator 2.2

Hospital Functionality

Status	Condition
Green	Fully operational
Yellow	Reduced capacity
Orange	Significant service disruptions
Red	Emergency services only
Black	Major healthcare system failure

---

### Indicator 2.3

Disease Outbreak Reports

Status	Condition
Green	No unusual activity
Yellow	Localized outbreaks
Orange	Multiple municipalities affected
Red	Provincial spread
Black	Nationwide public health emergency

---

## DASHBOARD CATEGORY III

# ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

## Key Question:

Can critical services operate reliably?

### Indicator 3.1

Average Daily Blackout Hours

Status	Condition
--------	-----------

Green	Less than 2 hours
-------	-------------------

Yellow	2–6 hours
--------	-----------

Orange	6–12 hours
--------	------------

Red	12–18 hours
-----	-------------

Black	More than 18 hours daily
-------	--------------------------

---

### Indicator 3.2

Fuel Availability

Status	Condition
--------	-----------

Green	Widely available
-------	------------------

Yellow	Periodic shortages
--------	--------------------

Orange	Significant restrictions
--------	--------------------------

Red	Severe shortages
-----	------------------

Black	Fuel largely unavailable
-------	--------------------------

---

# DASHBOARD CATEGORY IV

# WATER AND SANITATION

## Key Question:

Can communities access safe drinking water?

### Indicator 4.1

Water Service Interruptions

Status	Condition
--------	-----------

Green	Less than 10% of households affected
-------	--------------------------------------

<b>Status</b>	<b>Condition</b>
Yellow	10–25% affected
Orange	25–50% affected
Red	More than 50% affected
Black	Systemic service failure

---

### **Indicator 4.2**

Water Quality Concerns

<b>Status</b>	<b>Condition</b>
Green	No significant reports
Yellow	Isolated reports
Orange	Multiple communities affected
Red	Widespread contamination concerns
Black	Major public health emergency

---

## **DASHBOARD CATEGORY V**

### **COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY**

#### **Key Question:**

Are vulnerable populations increasingly at risk?

#### **Indicator 5.1**

Elderly Persons Requiring Assistance

#### **Indicator 5.2**

Persons with Disabilities Requiring Assistance

#### **Indicator 5.3**

Child Malnutrition Reports

#### **Indicator 5.4**

Households Skipping Meals

#### **Indicator 5.5**

Increase in Community Aid Requests

Each indicator scored Green–Black based on local thresholds established during implementation.

---

## **DASHBOARD CATEGORY VI**

### **HUMANITARIAN ACCESS**

#### **Key Question:**

Can assistance reach affected populations?

#### **Indicator 6.1**

Transportation Accessibility

<b>Status</b>	<b>Condition</b>
Green	Routes fully accessible
Yellow	Minor disruptions
Orange	Significant transportation challenges
Red	Major access restrictions
Black	Large areas inaccessible

---

#### **Indicator 6.2**

Distribution Capacity

Measures functionality of:

- Churches
  - Community Centers
  - Warehouses
  - Transportation Assets
  - Volunteer Networks
- 

## **DASHBOARD CATEGORY VII**

### **MIGRATION PRESSURE**

#### **Key Question:**

Are humanitarian conditions contributing to population displacement?

**Indicator 7.1**

Community Migration Intentions

**Indicator 7.2**

Increase in Irregular Migration Attempts

**Indicator 7.3**

Family Separation Trends

**Indicator 7.4**

Youth Outmigration

---

## **DASHBOARD CATEGORY VIII**

### **SOCIAL STABILITY**

**Key Question:**

Are communities becoming increasingly unstable?

**Indicator 8.1**

Community Stress Levels

**Indicator 8.2**

Public Demonstrations Related to Humanitarian Conditions

**Indicator 8.3**

Community Conflict Reports

**Indicator 8.4**

Breakdown of Local Coping Mechanisms

---

## **DASHBOARD CATEGORY IX**

### **HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE CAPACITY**

## **Key Question:**

Can communities effectively respond to humanitarian needs?

### **Indicator 9.1**

Volunteer Availability

### **Indicator 9.2**

Church Response Capacity

### **Indicator 9.3**

Civil Society Operational Capacity

### **Indicator 9.4**

Availability of Community Leaders

---

## **HUMANITARIAN RISK INDEX**

The Humanitarian Risk Index (HRI) combines all dashboard indicators into a single national and provincial score.

<b>Score</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>
0–20	Low Risk
21–40	Moderate Risk
41–60	Significant Risk
61–80	High Risk
81–100	Severe Humanitarian Risk

---

## **HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TRIGGERS**

### **Trigger Level 1**

(HRI > 40)

Actions:

- Increase monitoring frequency
- Conduct rapid assessments
- Alert preparedness partners

---

## **Trigger Level 2**

(HRI > 60)

Actions:

- Activate humanitarian coordination mechanisms
- Begin contingency planning
- Prepare resource mobilization

---

## **Trigger Level 3**

(HRI > 80)

Actions:

- Activate emergency humanitarian response framework
- Mobilize donor support
- Initiate emergency distributions
- Deploy rapid assessment teams

---

# **REPORTING STRUCTURE**

## **Community Humanitarian Monitor**

Weekly Reporting

↓

## **Municipal Coordinator**

Biweekly Analysis

↓

## **Provincial Coordinator**

Monthly Assessment

↓

# National Humanitarian Dashboard

Monthly National Situation Report

---

## RECOMMENDED DASHBOARD VISUALIZATION

National Dashboard:

1. Cuba Provincial Heat Map
  2. Food Security Status Map
  3. Electrical Grid Stress Map
  4. Vulnerability Concentration Map
  5. Humanitarian Access Map
  6. Migration Pressure Map
  7. Humanitarian Risk Index Trendline
  8. Community Monitoring Activity Dashboard
- 

## ANNEX E SUMMARY

The Cuba Humanitarian Early Warning Indicators Dashboard provides a practical framework for identifying emerging humanitarian needs before they become large-scale crises.

By combining community-based monitoring, standardized indicators, risk scoring, and real-time analysis, the system enables governments, humanitarian organizations, faith communities, donors, and civil society partners to move from reactive crisis response toward proactive preparedness and prevention.

The ultimate objective is simple:

**Detect deterioration early, act before conditions worsen, and reduce human suffering through timely, informed, and coordinated action.**

# ANNEX F

## 2026 CUBA HUMANITARIAN STABILITY AND RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

### Strategic Risk Assessment for Humanitarian Preparedness, Stabilization, and Recovery Planning

#### Purpose

This annex provides a structured assessment of the principal risks facing Cuba during the 2026–2030 planning period.

The matrix is intended to support:

- Humanitarian preparedness
- Strategic planning
- Scenario development
- Resource prioritization
- Early warning analysis
- Stabilization planning
- Donor decision-making
- Interagency coordination

The assessment evaluates each risk according to:

1. Probability of Occurrence
2. Potential Humanitarian Impact
3. Potential Stabilization Impact
4. Potential Migration Impact
5. Recommended Preparedness Actions

---

## RISK SCORING METHODOLOGY

## Probability Scale

### Score Probability

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1 | Very Low  |
| 2 | Low       |
| 3 | Moderate  |
| 4 | High      |
| 5 | Very High |
- 

## Impact Scale

### Score Impact

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1 | Minimal      |
| 2 | Limited      |
| 3 | Significant  |
| 4 | Severe       |
| 5 | Catastrophic |
- 

## Overall Risk Rating

### Score Rating

- |       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| 1–5   | Low         |
| 6–10  | Moderate    |
| 11–15 | Significant |
| 16–20 | High        |
| 21–25 | Critical    |
- 

# CATEGORY I

## FOOD SECURITY RISKS

### Risk F-1

#### National Food Supply Deterioration

Description:

Continued decline in domestic food production, import capacity, and food availability resulting in widespread food insecurity.

**Assessment Factor Score**

**Assessment Factor Score**

Probability 5  
Humanitarian Impact 5  
Stabilization Impact 4  
Migration Impact 4

**Overall Risk Rating:**

CRITICAL

Preparedness Actions:

- Expand food security monitoring.
  - Pre-identify food distribution networks.
  - Develop emergency food assistance plans.
  - Strengthen church-based feeding programs.
- 

**Risk F-2**

**Sharp Food Price Inflation**

Description:

Rapid increases in food prices resulting in reduced household purchasing power.

Overall Risk Rating:  
HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Market monitoring.
  - Vulnerability mapping.
  - Emergency cash and voucher assessments.
- 

**CATEGORY II**

**ELECTRICAL GRID RISKS**

**Risk F-3**

**National Electrical Grid Failure**

Description:

Major generation or transmission failure resulting in prolonged nationwide blackouts.

**Assessment Factor Score**

Probability 5  
Humanitarian Impact 5  
Stabilization Impact 5  
Migration Impact 3

**Overall Risk Rating:**

CRITICAL

Potential Consequences:

- Water system failures
- Hospital disruptions
- Food spoilage
- Communications failures
- Public unrest

Preparedness Actions:

- Backup communications systems.
- Community generator planning.
- Critical infrastructure mapping.

---

# CATEGORY III

## HEALTHCARE RISKS

### Risk F-4

#### Healthcare System Collapse

Description:

Severe medicine shortages, equipment failures, and staffing losses resulting in reduced healthcare access.

**Assessment Factor Score**

Probability 4  
Humanitarian Impact 5  
Stabilization Impact 4  
Migration Impact 3

**Overall Risk Rating:**

CRITICAL

Preparedness Actions:

- Medical supply planning.
  - Faith-based health network engagement.
  - Emergency pharmaceutical procurement.
- 

## **Risk F-5**

### **Infectious Disease Outbreak**

Description:

Localized or national outbreak exacerbated by deteriorating infrastructure.

Overall Risk Rating:

HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Disease surveillance.
  - Public health education.
  - Emergency medical response planning.
- 

## **CATEGORY IV**

### **WATER AND SANITATION RISKS**

## **Risk F-6**

### **Major Water System Failure**

Description:

Prolonged interruption of potable water systems affecting large population centers.

Overall Risk Rating:

CRITICAL

Preparedness Actions:

- Emergency water distribution planning.
  - Water purification programs.
  - Community water monitoring.
-

# CATEGORY V

## NATURAL DISASTER RISKS

### Risk F-7

#### Major Hurricane Impact

Description:

Category 3–5 hurricane affecting densely populated regions.

Assessment Factor	Score
Probability	4
Humanitarian Impact	5
Stabilization Impact	3
Migration Impact	2

#### Overall Risk Rating:

HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Pre-position relief supplies.
  - Train community response teams.
  - Develop shelter and evacuation plans.
- 

### Risk F-8

#### Compound Disaster Event

Description:

Major hurricane occurring during existing food, energy, and healthcare crises.

Overall Risk Rating:

CRITICAL

Preparedness Actions:

- Multi-sector contingency planning.
  - Humanitarian surge capacity development.
- 

# CATEGORY VI

# MIGRATION RISKS

## Risk F-9

### Mass Maritime Migration Event

Description:

Large-scale migration toward the United States and neighboring countries.

#### Assessment Factor Score

Probability 4

Humanitarian Impact 3

Stabilization Impact 4

Migration Impact 5

#### Overall Risk Rating:

HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- DHS contingency planning.
  - Coast Guard preparedness.
  - Regional coordination mechanisms.
- 

## Risk F-10

### Accelerated Youth Emigration

Description:

Continued loss of working-age and professional populations.

Overall Risk Rating:

HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Youth engagement programs.
  - Leadership development initiatives.
- 

# CATEGORY VII

# SOCIAL STABILITY RISKS

## **Risk F-11**

### **Localized Civil Disturbances**

Description:

Community protests triggered by food shortages, blackouts, or humanitarian conditions.

Overall Risk Rating:

HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Community monitoring.
  - Humanitarian assistance surge planning.
  - Local engagement mechanisms.
- 

## **Risk F-12**

### **Breakdown of Community Coping Mechanisms**

Description:

Communities lose ability to absorb economic and humanitarian stress.

Overall Risk Rating:

HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Strengthen faith-based support systems.
  - Expand resilience programs.
- 

# **CATEGORY VIII**

## **GOVERNANCE RISKS**

### **Risk F-13**

#### **Institutional Capacity Failure**

Description:

Government institutions increasingly unable to provide essential services.

**Assessment Factor Score**

**Assessment Factor Score**

Probability 4  
Humanitarian Impact 5  
Stabilization Impact 5  
Migration Impact 4

**Overall Risk Rating:**

CRITICAL

Preparedness Actions:

- Civil society strengthening.
  - Community service delivery planning.
  - Humanitarian coordination frameworks.
- 

**Risk F-14**

**Abrupt Political Transition**

Description:

Unexpected leadership transition creating governance uncertainty.

Overall Risk Rating:

SIGNIFICANT TO HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Scenario planning.
  - Stabilization frameworks.
  - Civil society preparedness.
- 

**CATEGORY IX**

**HUMANITARIAN ACCESS RISKS**

**Risk F-15**

**Humanitarian Distribution Disruptions**

Description:

Transportation, fuel, or infrastructure constraints limit assistance delivery.

Overall Risk Rating:  
HIGH

Preparedness Actions:

- Faith-based distribution planning.
  - Decentralized warehousing.
  - Transportation assessments.
- 

## **CATEGORY X**

### **CIVIL SOCIETY RISKS**

#### **Risk F-16**

##### **Weak Community Response Capacity**

Description:

Insufficient volunteer, organizational, or leadership capacity to respond effectively.

Overall Risk Rating:  
SIGNIFICANT

Preparedness Actions:

- Leadership development.
  - Volunteer training.
  - Community preparedness initiatives.
- 

## **STRATEGIC RISK HEAT MAP**

### **CRITICAL RISKS**

1. National Food Supply Deterioration
2. Electrical Grid Failure
3. Healthcare System Collapse
4. Major Water System Failure
5. Institutional Capacity Failure
6. Compound Disaster Event

---

## **HIGH RISKS**

1. Food Price Inflation
2. Infectious Disease Outbreak
3. Major Hurricane Impact
4. Mass Maritime Migration
5. Youth Emigration
6. Civil Disturbances
7. Humanitarian Distribution Disruptions

---

## **SIGNIFICANT RISKS**

1. Abrupt Political Transition
2. Weak Community Response Capacity

---

# **RISK PRIORITIZATION MATRIX**

## **Immediate Preparedness Priorities (2026–2027)**

### **Priority Tier 1**

- Food Security
- Electrical Grid Failure
- Healthcare System Failure
- Water Infrastructure Failure

### **Priority Tier 2**

- Migration Pressures
- Hurricane Preparedness
- Humanitarian Distribution Systems

### **Priority Tier 3**

- Governance Transition Scenarios
  - Long-Term Recovery Planning
-

# STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The assessment suggests that Cuba's most likely near-term risks are not primarily political but humanitarian and infrastructure-related.

The most probable destabilizing factors include:

- Food shortages
- Electrical outages
- Healthcare deterioration
- Water system failures
- Continued migration
- Community vulnerability

These conditions may occur independently or simultaneously.

The highest-risk scenario is a compound crisis in which multiple systems fail simultaneously, potentially overwhelming existing coping mechanisms.

---

## RECOMMENDED PREPAREDNESS INVESTMENTS

### Highest Return Investments

1. Community Humanitarian Monitoring Systems
  2. Faith-Based Humanitarian Networks
  3. Food Security Preparedness
  4. Volunteer Response Teams
  5. Distribution Infrastructure
  6. Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms
  7. Community Resilience Programs
  8. Leadership Development Initiatives
- 

## ANNEX F SUMMARY

The 2026 Cuba Humanitarian Stability and Risk Assessment indicates that the most significant threats facing Cuba during the next several years are humanitarian, infrastructure, demographic, and institutional in nature.

While the timing and severity of future developments remain uncertain, the evidence strongly supports immediate investments in preparedness, community resilience, humanitarian monitoring, faith-based partnerships, logistics planning, and civil society strengthening.

Preparedness today remains the most effective strategy for reducing human suffering tomorrow.

# ANNEX G

## RECOMMENDED PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS MATRIX

### Cuba Humanitarian Crisis, Stabilization, and Democratic Transition

#### Purpose

This annex provides a practical preparedness framework identifying recommended actions for key stakeholders before, during, and after a potential humanitarian emergency, stabilization effort, or democratic transition in Cuba.

The matrix is organized according to stakeholder groups and operational phases.

---

### PHASE I: PREPAREDNESS (BEFORE A MAJOR CRISIS)

Stakeholder	Recommended Actions	Priority
U.S. Department of State	Establish interagency Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Working Group	High
USAID / BHA	Develop Cuba Humanitarian Response Framework and contingency plans	High
SOUTHCOM	Conduct humanitarian logistics and migration tabletop exercises	High
DHS / Coast Guard	Update maritime migration contingency plans	High
U.S. Treasury	Review humanitarian licensing and emergency assistance procedures	Medium
USDA	Identify emergency food commodity options and procurement mechanisms	Medium
Donors	Establish preparedness funding mechanisms	High
Humanitarian NGOs	Develop Cuba-specific contingency plans	High
Faith-Based Organizations	Develop church preparedness and response plans	High
Academic Institutions	Conduct vulnerability and humanitarian mapping studies	Medium
Diaspora Organizations	Establish humanitarian support coordination networks	Medium

---

#### Community Preparedness Actions

Activity	Lead Actors	Outcome
Community Humanitarian Monitor Training	NGOs / Faith Communities	Early warning capacity
Volunteer Response Team Development	Churches	Community surge capacity
Vulnerability Mapping	Community Organizations	Improved beneficiary targeting
Disaster Preparedness Training	Faith Communities / NGOs	Increased resilience
Humanitarian Distribution Site Mapping	Churches / NGOs	Faster response capability

## PHASE II: CRISIS ONSET (0–30 DAYS)

### Immediate Priorities

#### Objective:

Save Lives and Establish Situational Awareness

Stakeholder	Immediate Actions
State Department	Activate crisis coordination mechanisms
USAID	Deploy rapid assessment teams
SOUTHCOM	Prepare logistics support capabilities
Humanitarian NGOs	Conduct emergency needs assessments
Faith Communities	Begin local humanitarian reporting
Donors	Activate emergency funding mechanisms
Diaspora Groups	Mobilize humanitarian support resources
Academic Partners	Provide rapid analysis and mapping support

### Immediate Humanitarian Priorities

Sector	Priority Actions
Food Security	Assess food shortages and vulnerable populations
Healthcare	Assess medicine availability and hospital functionality
Water	Identify service interruptions and critical needs
Energy	Monitor blackout impacts and priority facilities
Shelter	Identify displaced populations
Transportation	Assess logistics and access routes
Communications	Establish emergency reporting channels

## PHASE III: EMERGENCY RESPONSE (1–6 MONTHS)

# Humanitarian Operations

Stakeholder	Key Actions
USAID	Coordinate humanitarian funding and response
Donors	Support emergency food and medical assistance
NGOs	Implement humanitarian programs
Faith Communities	Conduct community-level distributions
Local Civil Society	Assist beneficiary identification and monitoring
Academic Institutions	Analyze humanitarian trends
Diaspora Organizations	Provide supplemental assistance and technical expertise

---

## Priority Humanitarian Programs

### Food Security

- Emergency food distributions
- Community feeding centers
- Nutritional support for vulnerable populations

### Healthcare

- Essential medicine distribution
- Mobile medical support
- Public health monitoring

### Water and Sanitation

- Emergency water systems
- Hygiene promotion
- Sanitation support

### Community Stabilization

- Volunteer mobilization
  - Psychosocial support
  - Community communications
- 

## PHASE IV: STABILIZATION (6–24 MONTHS)

## Stabilization Objectives

Objective	Lead Stakeholders
Restore Essential Services	Government / Donors
Rehabilitate Infrastructure	Government / International Partners
Strengthen Local Governance	Civil Society / Technical Assistance Providers
Expand Food Production	Agricultural Programs
Restore Healthcare Capacity	Public Health Partners
Support Community Recovery	Faith-Based and Community Organizations

---

## Civil Society Development Actions

Action	Expected Outcome
Leadership Training	Stronger local leadership
Civic Education	Increased citizen participation
Organizational Development	Stronger community institutions
Youth Engagement	Future leadership pipeline
Women's Leadership Programs	More inclusive participation

---

# PHASE V: LONG-TERM RECOVERY (2–10 YEARS)

## Strategic Recovery Priorities

Sector	Recovery Objective
Economy	Private-sector growth and job creation
Agriculture	Increased domestic food production
Infrastructure	Modernized transportation and utilities
Education	Workforce development
Healthcare	Sustainable healthcare systems
Governance	Transparent and accountable institutions
Civil Society	Independent and sustainable civic institutions

---

# RECOMMENDED ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDER

## U.S. GOVERNMENT

## **Priority Actions**

1. Establish Cuba Humanitarian Preparedness Task Force.
  2. Conduct annual preparedness exercises.
  3. Develop humanitarian logistics plans.
  4. Strengthen humanitarian information systems.
  5. Support faith-based humanitarian partners.
  6. Expand civil society support programs.
  7. Develop stabilization and recovery frameworks.
  8. Coordinate migration contingency planning.
- 

## **DONORS**

### **Priority Actions**

1. Create preparedness grant windows.
  2. Support local capacity development.
  3. Invest in community resilience.
  4. Strengthen humanitarian monitoring systems.
  5. Support faith-based humanitarian infrastructure.
  6. Promote donor coordination.
  7. Fund leadership development initiatives.
  8. Support recovery planning activities.
- 

## **HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Priority Actions**

1. Develop contingency plans.
2. Build local partnerships.
3. Establish monitoring systems.
4. Train volunteers.

5. Conduct logistics assessments.
  6. Map distribution assets.
  7. Strengthen accountability systems.
  8. Participate in coordination mechanisms.
- 

## **FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Priority Actions**

1. Develop emergency response plans.
  2. Establish volunteer response teams.
  3. Expand community service ministries.
  4. Strengthen humanitarian monitoring.
  5. Improve distribution capacity.
  6. Build interchurch partnerships.
  7. Develop leadership programs.
  8. Promote community resilience.
- 

## **ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS**

### **Priority Actions**

1. Conduct vulnerability assessments.
  2. Support humanitarian research.
  3. Develop preparedness training programs.
  4. Assist with GIS mapping and data analysis.
  5. Support monitoring systems.
  6. Conduct scenario-planning exercises.
  7. Evaluate program effectiveness.
  8. Publish lessons learned.
-

# DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS

## Priority Actions

1. Coordinate humanitarian support efforts.
  2. Identify technical experts.
  3. Develop volunteer networks.
  4. Support preparedness initiatives.
  5. Assist with recovery planning.
  6. Promote private-sector engagement.
  7. Support leadership development.
  8. Facilitate international partnerships.
- 

# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Preparedness efforts should be measured using indicators such as:

## Preparedness Indicators

- Number of preparedness plans completed.
- Number of trained community monitors.
- Number of volunteer response teams established.
- Number of mapped distribution sites.
- Number of preparedness exercises conducted.

## Humanitarian Indicators

- Beneficiaries served.
- Food distributed.
- Medical supplies delivered.
- Communities reached.
- Response times.

## Resilience Indicators

- Community partnerships established.
  - Local organizations strengthened.
  - Leaders trained.
  - Community recovery initiatives launched.
- 

## **ANNEX G SUMMARY**

Preparedness is a shared responsibility.

Governments, humanitarian organizations, faith communities, civil society groups, donors, academic institutions, and diaspora partners each possess unique capabilities that can contribute to reducing human suffering and strengthening resilience.

The actions outlined in this matrix provide a practical roadmap for moving from awareness to preparedness and from preparedness to effective response.

The most successful future response will not be the one with the largest budget. It will be the one that invested earliest in planning, partnerships, trust, local capacity, and community resilience.

# ANNEX H

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCE DOCUMENTS

### Purpose

This bibliography provides the principal references, reports, studies, assessments, policy documents, and source materials used in the preparation of this white paper.

The sources represent a combination of:

- Academic research
- Humanitarian assessments
- Government reports
- International organization publications
- Civil society documentation
- Religious freedom reports
- Migration studies
- Disaster preparedness references
- Field observations and practitioner experience

This bibliography is intended to serve as a resource for policymakers, humanitarian organizations, researchers, donors, faith-based organizations, and civil society leaders seeking additional information regarding Cuba's humanitarian conditions, civil society, religious communities, preparedness planning, and transition-related issues.

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## SECTION I

### CUBA HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONS

**United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**

Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean (Various Years)

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**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

Human Development Reports

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**Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**

Food Security and Nutrition Reports

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**World Food Programme (WFP)**

Food Security Assessments and Emergency Response Publications

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**Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)**

Health in the Americas Reports

Country Health Profiles – Cuba

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**World Health Organization (WHO)**

Global Health Observatory Data

Emergency Preparedness and Health Systems Publications

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**Inter-American Dialogue**

Reports on Cuban Economic Conditions, Migration, and Remittances

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**Brookings Institution**

Research on Cuban Economic Reform and Development

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**Cuba Study Group**

Policy Papers and Economic Assessments

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**SECTION II**

**MIGRATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC  
STUDIES**

**U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)**

Southwest Border and Maritime Migration Statistics

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## **U.S. Coast Guard**

Maritime Migration Reports

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## **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

Migration Trends in the Caribbean

Migration Data Portal

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## **Pew Research Center**

Cuban Migration and Diaspora Studies

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## **Migration Policy Institute**

Cuba Migration Profiles and Regional Analysis

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## **Florida International University**

Cuban Research Institute Publications

Migration and Diaspora Studies

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# **SECTION III**

# **HUMANITARIAN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

## **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**

Humanitarian Programme Cycle Guidance

Humanitarian Needs Assessment Handbook

Emergency Response Preparedness Guidance

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## **Sphere Association**

The Sphere Handbook:  
Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response

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## **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**

World Disasters Report

Community Resilience Framework

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## **USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)**

Emergency Response and Preparedness Publications

Disaster Risk Reduction Frameworks

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## **FEMA**

National Preparedness Framework

Community Resilience Guidance

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## **Department of Homeland Security**

National Response Framework

National Risk Management Publications

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# **SECTION IV**

# **FAITH-BASED HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

## **World Council of Churches**

Humanitarian and Development Publications

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## **Caritas Internationalis**

Emergency Response and Community Development Reports

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## **Catholic Relief Services**

Humanitarian Best Practices and Resilience Programming

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**World Vision International**

Community Resilience and Disaster Preparedness Resources

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**Samaritan's Purse**

Emergency Relief and Disaster Response Publications

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**Food for the Hungry**

Community Development and Resilience Models

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**Tearfund**

Faith and Humanitarian Response Publications

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**SECTION V****RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND CIVIL SOCIETY****U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)**

Annual Reports on Cuba

Special Reports on Freedom of Religion or Belief

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**U.S. Department of State**

International Religious Freedom Reports

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices

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**Observatory of Religious Freedom in Latin America (OLIRE)**

Monitoring Reports and Incident Documentation

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**Christian Solidarity Worldwide**

Freedom of Religion or Belief Reports

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**Open Doors International**

World Watch List Reports

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**Human Rights Watch**

Cuba Country Reports

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**Amnesty International**

Annual Human Rights Reports

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**Freedom House**

Freedom in the World Reports

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**SECTION VI**

**CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIC  
TRANSITIONS**

**National Endowment for Democracy (NED)**

Civil Society Strengthening Publications

Democratic Transition Lessons Learned

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**International Republican Institute (IRI)**

Civil Society and Democratic Governance Resources

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**National Democratic Institute (NDI)**

Democratic Transition and Civic Participation Resources

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**International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL)**

Civil Society Legal Environment Reports

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**World Bank**

Governance Indicators

Institutional Capacity Assessments

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**OECD**

Governance and Institutional Development Publications

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**SECTION VII****COMPARATIVE TRANSITION CASE STUDIES****Germany Reunification Studies**

Federal Government of Germany

German Institute for Economic Research

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**Eastern Europe Democratic Transition Studies**

Center for European Policy Analysis

Various Academic Journals

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**Latin American Democratic Transition Literature**

Woodrow Wilson Center

Inter-American Dialogue

Council on Foreign Relations

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**Haiti Humanitarian Response Assessments**

United Nations

USAID

World Bank

Inter-American Development Bank

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**Venezuela Humanitarian Crisis Studies**

Brookings Institution

Migration Policy Institute

OAS Reports

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**SECTION VIII**

**U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY REFERENCES**

**Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba**

Report to the President  
(May 2004)

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**Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba**

Second Report  
(July 2006)

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**U.S. Department of State**

Western Hemisphere Affairs Publications

Cuba Policy Statements

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**U.S. Agency for International Development**

Cuba Program Documentation

Civil Society Strengthening Resources

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**Department of Defense**

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Publications

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**U.S. Southern Command**

Humanitarian Assistance Planning References

Disaster Response Frameworks

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## **SECTION IX**

# **ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS**

### **Florida International University**

Cuban Research Institute

Jack D. Gordon Institute

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

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### **Georgetown University**

Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

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### **Council on Foreign Relations**

Religion and Foreign Policy Program

Latin America Program

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### **University of Miami**

Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies

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### **Harvard University**

Humanitarian Initiative

Disaster Management Research

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## **SECTION X**

# FIELD EXPERIENCE AND PRACTITIONER SOURCES

In addition to published materials, this white paper incorporates insights derived from:

- Humanitarian operations conducted throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.
  - Faith-based humanitarian distribution networks.
  - Disaster preparedness initiatives.
  - Civil society strengthening programs.
  - Religious freedom monitoring efforts.
  - Community resilience programs.
  - Humanitarian logistics planning exercises.
  - Consultations with humanitarian practitioners, academic experts, faith leaders, policymakers, and civil society representatives.
- 

## KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER READING

1. The Sphere Handbook – Humanitarian Standards
  2. OCHA Emergency Response Preparedness Guidance
  3. USCIRF Annual Reports on Cuba
  4. International Religious Freedom Reports (U.S. Department of State)
  5. Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba (2004, 2006)
  6. FEMA National Preparedness Framework
  7. IFRC World Disasters Report
  8. Inter-American Dialogue Cuba Economic Studies
  9. PAHO Cuba Health Sector Publications
  10. Florida International University Cuba Research Publications
-

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY STATEMENT**

The preparation of this white paper reflects a multidisciplinary approach combining humanitarian response experience, disaster preparedness planning, civil society strengthening, religious freedom advocacy, community resilience frameworks, academic research, and field-based observations. The sources cited herein provide both historical context and contemporary analysis relevant to understanding Cuba's humanitarian situation and preparing for potential future scenarios.

Readers are encouraged to consult these resources directly for deeper analysis and specialized subject matter expertise.

# ANNEX I

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

### Purpose

This annex provides definitions for the acronyms, abbreviations, and specialized terms used throughout this white paper.

The list includes humanitarian, governmental, faith-based, civil society, academic, and Cuba-specific terminology referenced in the document.

---

### A

#### AC

Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs – Office of Cuban Affairs (U.S. Department of State)

#### ACFC

Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba

#### ADSAH

Association for the Development of Sustainable Agriculture in Haiti

#### ART

Americas Relief Team

#### BHA

Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID)

---

### C

#### CADF

Cuba Annual Democracy Forum

#### CARITAS

Catholic humanitarian and social assistance organization operating through diocesan and parish structures

**CBP**

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

**CDC**

Community Distribution Center

**C-CHMI**

Cuba Community Humanitarian Monitoring Initiative

**CHM**

Community Humanitarian Monitor

**CIFAL**

Centre International de Formation des Autorités et Leaders

**CIFAL Miami**

UNITAR-affiliated training center established through partnership among Florida International University, Outreach Aid to the Americas, and UNITAR

**CONOPS**

Concept of Operations

**CPC**

Country of Particular Concern

**CRS**

Catholic Relief Services

**CSO**

Civil Society Organization

---

**D****DHS**

Department of Homeland Security

**DOD**

Department of Defense

## **DRL**

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (U.S. Department of State)

## **DHR**

Bureau of Disaster and Humanitarian Response (U.S. Department of State)

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## **E**

### **ECLAC**

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

### **EWS**

Early Warning System

### **EchoCuba**

Faith-based Cuba program operated by Outreach Aid to the Americas

---

## **F**

### **FAO**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### **FEMA**

Federal Emergency Management Agency

### **FIU**

Florida International University

### **FLED**

Foundation for Liberty and Democracy

### **FoRB**

Freedom of Religion or Belief

### **FPH**

Federation of Protestant Churches of Haiti

---

## **G**

### **GIS**

Geographic Information System

### **GO**

Government Organization

### **GONGOs**

Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations

---

## **H**

### **HRI**

Humanitarian Risk Index

### **HADR**

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

### **HHS**

Department of Health and Human Services

### **HNO**

Humanitarian Needs Overview

---

## **I**

### **ICLEP**

Cuban Institute for Freedom of Expression and Press

### **ICNL**

International Center for Not-for-Profit Law

### **IFRC**

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## **IOM**

International Organization for Migration

## **IRI**

International Republican Institute

---

## **J**

### **JGI**

Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy

---

## **M**

### **M&E**

Monitoring and Evaluation

### **MOU**

Memorandum of Understanding

### **MPI**

Migration Policy Institute

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## **N**

### **NDI**

National Democratic Institute

### **NED**

National Endowment for Democracy

### **NGO**

Non-Governmental Organization

### **NOFO**

Notice of Funding Opportunity

---

## **O**

### **OAA**

Outreach Aid to the Americas

### **OAS**

Organization of American States

### **OCB**

Office of Cuba Broadcasting

### **OCHA**

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

### **OECD**

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

### **OFDA**

Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (former USAID designation)

### **OGFS**

Office of Global Food Security (U.S. Department of State)

### **OLIRE**

Observatory of Religious Freedom in Latin America

### **ORA**

Office of Religious Affairs (Cuba)

---

## **P**

### **PAHO**

Pan American Health Organization

### **PVO**

Private Voluntary Organization

## **PRC**

People's Republic of China

## **PRM**

Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (U.S. Department of State)

---

## **R**

### **RAMPS**

Regional Alliances and Multistakeholder Partnerships for Cybersecurity

### **RCFR**

Religious Communities for Freedom and Rights

### **RDD**

Regional Disaster Director

---

## **S**

### **SDG**

Sustainable Development Goal

### **SMS**

Short Message Service

### **SNFP**

Specialized Nutritious Food Product

### **SOUTHCOM**

United States Southern Command

### **Sphere**

Sphere Humanitarian Standards Initiative

---

## **T**

## **TOR**

Terms of Reference

## **TTX**

Tabletop Exercise

---

## **U**

### **UN**

United Nations

### **UNDP**

United Nations Development Programme

### **UNITAR**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

### **USCIRF**

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom

### **USDA**

United States Department of Agriculture

### **USAID**

United States Agency for International Development

### **USG**

United States Government

---

## **V**

### **VOAD**

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

---

## **W**

## **WASH**

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

## **WHA**

Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (U.S. Department of State)

## **WHO**

World Health Organization

## **WFP**

World Food Programme

## **WHA/AC**

Office of Cuban Affairs, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

---

## **Y**

## **YCD**

Youth Civic Development

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# **KEY TERMS**

## **Community Resilience**

The capacity of individuals, institutions, and communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses.

---

## **Humanitarian Preparedness**

Actions taken before a crisis to improve response effectiveness and reduce human suffering.

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## **Last-Mile Delivery**

The final stage of humanitarian distribution in which assistance reaches intended beneficiaries.

---

## **Social Cohesion**

The degree of trust, cooperation, and connectedness within a community.

---

## **Stabilization**

Activities designed to support public order, community resilience, service delivery, and recovery during periods of crisis or transition.

---

## **Transition**

A period of significant political, economic, institutional, or social change.

---

## **Vulnerable Population**

Individuals or groups facing increased risk due to age, disability, illness, poverty, displacement, or other factors affecting their ability to cope with crisis conditions.

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# **Frequently Referenced Organizations**

## **OAA**

Outreach Aid to the Americas

## **EchoCuba**

OAA's Cuba-focused humanitarian and religious freedom initiative

## **CIFAL Miami**

UNITAR-affiliated training and leadership center based in Miami

## **FIU**

Florida International University

## **USCIRF**

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom

## **OLIRE**

Observatory of Religious Freedom in Latin America

## **SOUTHCOM**

United States Southern Command

## **USAID/BHA**

U.S. Government's principal humanitarian response agency

## **WHA/AC**

State Department Office of Cuban Affairs

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# **Annex I Summary**

The humanitarian, governance, civil society, and preparedness fields utilize extensive technical terminology and organizational abbreviations. This glossary is intended to provide readers with a quick reference guide to terms used throughout the white paper and to improve accessibility for policymakers, humanitarian practitioners, faith leaders, academics, donors, and community stakeholders.

# ANNEX J

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, AUTHOR INFORMATION, AND PUBLICATION NOTES

### Acknowledgments

The preparation of this white paper reflects the contributions, insights, experience, and dedication of numerous individuals and organizations committed to humanitarian service, community resilience, religious freedom, civil society development, and the well-being of the Cuban people.

The author wishes to express appreciation to humanitarian practitioners, faith leaders, academic researchers, civil society representatives, public officials, disaster response professionals, and policy experts whose work, experience, and observations informed the development of this publication.

Special recognition is extended to the many faith-based organizations, community leaders, and volunteers throughout Cuba and the Cuban diaspora who continue to serve vulnerable populations under challenging circumstances and whose commitment to compassion, service, and resilience provides inspiration for this work.

The author also acknowledges the contributions of humanitarian organizations, academic institutions, international development practitioners, and government professionals whose publications, research, and field experience have advanced understanding of humanitarian preparedness, disaster response, community resilience, and democratic transitions.

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### Dedication

This white paper is dedicated to:

#### **The Cuban People**

Whose perseverance, dignity, resilience, faith, and hope continue to inspire those working toward a future characterized by greater opportunity, human flourishing, and community well-being.

#### **Community Volunteers**

Who serve quietly and faithfully in neighborhoods, churches, schools, and communities across Cuba.

#### **Faith Leaders**

Who provide hope, guidance, humanitarian assistance, and spiritual encouragement during times of hardship.

#### **Humanitarian Workers**

Who dedicate themselves to reducing human suffering and strengthening vulnerable communities.

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## About the Author

### Dr. Teofilo (Teo) A. Babun

Dr. Teofilo A. Babun is President and Chief Executive Officer of Outreach Aid to the Americas (OAA), a U.S.-based humanitarian and development organization working throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

Dr. Babun has more than three decades of experience in humanitarian assistance, civil society strengthening, faith-based engagement, religious freedom advocacy, disaster preparedness, and community development.

Born in Cuba, Dr. Babun has devoted much of his professional life to supporting humanitarian initiatives, faith communities, and civil society organizations serving vulnerable populations throughout the region.

He has worked extensively with governments, international organizations, academic institutions, faith-based networks, and humanitarian partners to promote community resilience, humanitarian preparedness, and sustainable development.

Dr. Babun currently serves as Chairman of CIFAL Miami, a UNITAR-affiliated center established through collaboration among Florida International University, Outreach Aid to the Americas, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

His work has included leadership roles in humanitarian food assistance, disaster response, freedom of religion or belief initiatives, community resilience programming, leadership development, and strategic planning for vulnerable and underserved populations.

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## About Outreach Aid to the Americas

### Outreach Aid to the Americas (OAA)

Outreach Aid to the Americas is a nonprofit humanitarian and development organization dedicated to strengthening vulnerable communities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

OAA works in partnership with local organizations, faith communities, civil society groups, academic institutions, and government stakeholders to advance:

- Humanitarian assistance
- Disaster preparedness
- Community resilience

- Food security
- Leadership development
- Religious freedom
- Civil society strengthening
- Sustainable development

Since its founding, OAA has supported humanitarian and development initiatives benefiting hundreds of thousands of individuals throughout the region.

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## About EchoCuba

### EchoCuba

EchoCuba is a program of Outreach Aid to the Americas focused on supporting faith communities, humanitarian initiatives, civil society organizations, and freedom of religion or belief efforts in Cuba.

EchoCuba works with diverse faith-based and community partners throughout the island to strengthen resilience, promote human dignity, support vulnerable populations, and advance peaceful community development.

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## About CIFAL Miami

### CIFAL Miami

CIFAL Miami is part of the global CIFAL network established by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Through partnerships with Florida International University and Outreach Aid to the Americas, CIFAL Miami serves as a center for education, leadership development, capacity building, and collaborative problem-solving in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Its programs focus on:

- Disaster preparedness
- Humanitarian response
- Cybersecurity
- Community resilience
- Sustainable development

- Leadership training
  - Institutional strengthening
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## **Purpose of This Publication**

This white paper was prepared to:

1. Assess current humanitarian and social conditions in Cuba.
2. Examine potential future scenarios.
3. Identify humanitarian preparedness requirements.
4. Highlight the role of faith communities and civil society.
5. Promote practical planning and coordination.
6. Encourage investments in resilience and preparedness.
7. Support informed policy dialogue.

The publication is intended as a resource for:

- Policymakers
  - Humanitarian organizations
  - Faith-based organizations
  - Academic institutions
  - Civil society leaders
  - Donors
  - Development practitioners
  - Community stakeholders
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## **Methodological Note**

This white paper reflects a multidisciplinary approach that integrates:

- Humanitarian preparedness principles
- Disaster risk reduction frameworks
- Community resilience models

- Civil society strengthening practices
- Religious freedom research
- Humanitarian logistics planning
- Comparative transition analysis
- Field-based practitioner experience

The paper draws upon both published sources and practical lessons learned from humanitarian operations and community development initiatives throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

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## Limitations

The author recognizes that conditions within Cuba continue to evolve and that future developments may differ from the scenarios discussed in this publication.

Accordingly:

- The analysis should be viewed as a preparedness and planning resource rather than a prediction.
- Risk assessments reflect conditions and information available at the time of publication.
- Future updates may be required as circumstances change.

Preparedness planning necessarily involves uncertainty, and this publication is intended to support informed discussion rather than provide definitive forecasts.

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## Disclaimer

The views and recommendations presented in this publication are intended solely for informational, educational, humanitarian, and planning purposes.

Nothing contained herein should be interpreted as representing official positions of any government, international organization, donor agency, academic institution, or partner organization unless explicitly stated.

Any errors or omissions remain the responsibility of the author.

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## **Contact Information**

### **Outreach Aid to the Americas (OAA)**

Miami, Florida, USA

Website: [Insert Website]

Email: [Insert Organizational Email]

Telephone: [Insert Telephone]

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### **EchoCuba**

Program of Outreach Aid to the Americas

Miami, Florida, USA

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### **CIFAL Miami**

Florida International University / Outreach Aid to the Americas / UNITAR Partnership

Miami, Florida, USA

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## **Final Acknowledgment**

The ultimate purpose of humanitarian preparedness is not simply to prepare for emergencies.

It is to reduce suffering, strengthen communities, preserve human dignity, and create opportunities for people to thrive.

The recommendations contained within this white paper are offered in that spirit—with gratitude for those who serve, respect for those who endure hardship, and hope for a future in which the Cuban people can realize their full potential in freedom, dignity, and peace.

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**End of White Paper**