

Impact of the oil blockade on humanitarian needs

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

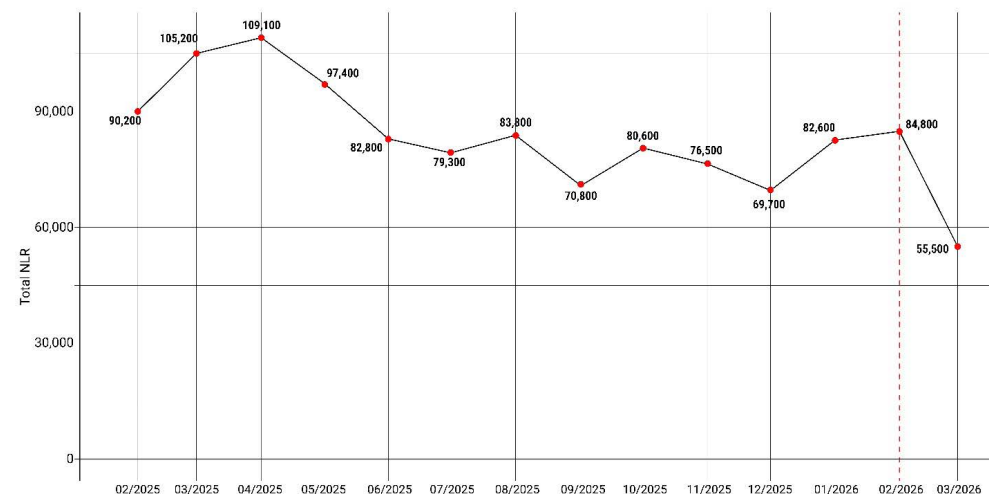
Since early January 2026, Cuba has experienced a rapid deterioration in fuel availability and a shortage of critical supplies, especially food and medicine. An estimated nine million people have been affected, as fuel scarcity has disrupted electricity generation and transport systems in all regions of the country, hindering food availability and access, worsening health conditions, disrupting livelihoods, reducing mobility, impeding access to remote areas, and limiting access to essential services nationwide (KII 09/04/2026; KII 10/04/2026; DW 22/03/2026; NYT 16/01/2026; OPEN 17/03/2026).

By 10 April, power outages had been reported nationwide, though severity varied geographically, with more prolonged disruptions in eastern provinces affected by the 2025 hurricanes. Daily power cuts in both urban and rural areas have been lasting between 12–20 hours, and in some cases exceeding 48–72 hours, particularly during grid-collapse events. In March alone, there were three national blackouts, with the entire island losing power because it generates zero megawatts (KII 10/04/2026; OCHA/ UNCT 01/04/2026).

Analysis of nighttime light reflectance (NLR) since February 2025 indicates a marked downward trend. From February 2025 to February 2026, NLR in Cuba fell from 90,200 nanoWatts per cm² per steradian (nW/cm²/sr) to 84,800 nW/cm²/sr, before a precipitous decline to 55,000 nW/cm²/sr in March 2026 – a reduction of about 34.6% in just one month and around 38.5% year-on-year.

Cuba's high dependence on imported fuel for electricity, water pumping, transport, cooking, and industry makes the country's energy system structurally vulnerable. Domestic production covers only around 40% of the estimated daily requirement of 100,000 barrels, leaving the system highly exposed to external supply shocks (CFR 31/03/2026; CNN 30/03/2026). In 2025, oil from Venezuela accounted for 61% of Cuba's supply, Mexico provided 25%, and supplies from Russia and Algeria covered the remaining 10% and 4%, respectively (S&P Global 09/02/2026).

Figure 1. Cuba's NLR since February 2025



Source: ACAPS using data from NASA (accessed 07/04/2026); EOG (accessed 07/04/2026); EC JRC (accessed 07/04/2026)

Since 3 January, however, following the US imprisonment of former Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro, Venezuela has not sent oil shipments to Cuba. This disruption has been further compounded by US policy measures curtailing fuel inflows from other countries, including an executive order threatening tariffs on any country exporting oil to Cuba (NYT 16/01/2026; OPEN 17/03/2026; AJ 26/02/2026). By late January, Mexico had suspended fuel shipments to Cuba. While the Mexican president described this as a 'sovereign' decision, it occurred in the context of increased external pressure, making it difficult to attribute causality to a single factor or determine a clear timeline for resumption (Verfassungs 07/04/2026; Reuters 09/02/2026 and 08/04/2026; NYT 10/02/2026; The Guardian 27/01/2026).

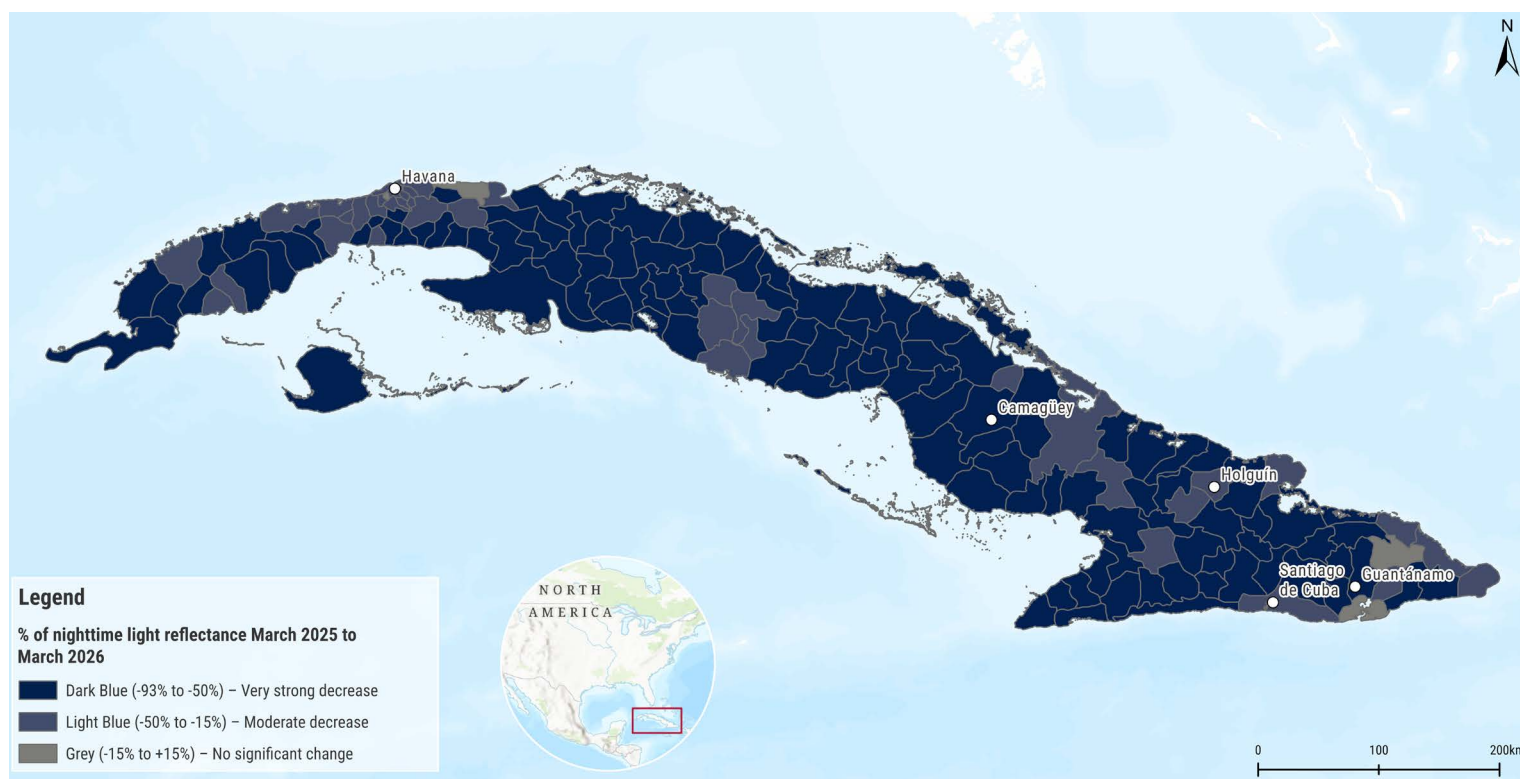
The supply shock has triggered a severe energy crisis by disrupting electricity generation, which in turn has impaired service delivery systems. Electricity shortages have affected healthcare, water and sanitation systems, telecommunications, and

supply chains for food and medical goods (AJ 05/03/2026; The Guardian 16/03/2026; El Pais 17/02/2026). The impacts are nationwide but unevenly distributed, resulting in a rapid deterioration and interruption of basic services, especially in provinces with weaker infrastructure and higher exposure to previous climate shocks, such as Granma and Santiago de Cuba (UN News 26/02/2026; El Pais 17/02/2026).

Since mid-March 2026, Cuba has engaged in discussions with the US aimed at easing restrictions on oil imports. By 11 April, however, no publicly available information on the outcome or progress of these engagements had been released (KII 10/04/2026; CFR 31/03/2026).

The current fuel shortage follows the severe impacts of Hurricane Melissa in October 2025, which affected more than 2.2 million people, particularly in the eastern provinces, causing widespread damage to housing, infrastructure, and agricultural livelihoods. The hurricane's impacts increased reliance on already constrained public services – such as food distribution and health provision – and disrupted local supply chains, further eroding people's capacity to cope with future shocks. The country also experienced a dengue and chikungunya outbreak that affected over 44,000 people nationwide in 2025. Food insecurity and malnutrition have also been a persistent issue in Cuba: the most recent data from 2024 indicated that, as a result of inflation, food shortages, and power cuts, 29% of Cubans ate two meals per day and 4% ate only one (KII 10/04/2026; IFRC 31/12/2025; DW 15/12/2025 and 15/08/2025).

MAP 1. CUBA'S NLR BETWEEN MARCH 2025 AND MARCH 2026 BY MUNICIPALITY



Source: ACAPS using data from NASA (accessed 07/04/2026); EOG (accessed 07/04/2026); EC JRC (accessed 07/04/2026)

Pre-existing structural drivers of fuel vulnerability

High dependence on oil: Cuba’s limited diversification of energy sources makes it particularly vulnerable to supply disruptions. The country’s energy consumption is heavily dependent on petroleum, exceeding the regional average of 45%, while other countries – such as Jamaica and the Dominican Republic – have started gradually matching their petroleum consumption with natural gas, smaller portions of coal, nuclear, and renewable energy, making them less vulnerable to external shocks (Reuters 08/04/2026; IET 04/12/2024). Cuba’s ability to follow suit has been constrained by longstanding trade restrictions and limited access to external financing and technology caused by the US embargo, which impedes external investment and imports (Main 05/03/2020; AIIA 19/02/2026). Heavy reliance on oil for electricity generation creates systemic exposure to supply disruptions, especially given import dependence.

Disruption of fuel supply: Venezuela had been Cuba’s primary oil supplier for over two decades, accounting for 61% of Cuba’s supply, followed by Mexico and Russia. Prior to 2026, declining refining capacity and geopolitical developments had already reduced shipments, but the political crisis in Venezuela led to their complete suspension (Reuters 08/04/2026). Recent logistical restrictions on Venezuelan crude exports to Cuba are a new development, but Cuba has faced a longstanding US trade embargo since 1962, which banned all trade and financial transactions with the island unless licensed by the US Treasury Department (Time 10/04/2026; WOLA 04/02/2022). This has, as a consequence, constrained financing, fuel diversification, and access to alternative suppliers, limiting the development of greater resilience.

Limited foreign currency reserves: Even when oil is available, Cuba often cannot afford or access it. A lack of foreign currency reserves has constrained the Cuban Government’s ability to purchase fuel on global markets to make up the shortfall, aggravated by a deep economic crisis (the economy has contracted by 11% in the last five years, with the COVID-19 pandemic having far-reaching impacts on tourism, remittances, and trade), the tightening of US sanctions (President Trump has reinstated the majority of travel, trade, and financial restrictions temporarily eased during the Obama administration, 2008–2016), and growing US military pressure in the Caribbean Sea against Venezuela (AA 13/04/2026; SWI 09/12/2025; Infobae 02/04/2025; WOLA 04/02/2022).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Anticipated impacts.....	4
Current and anticipated impacts of the blockade.....	5
Health.....	5
Food insecurity and malnutrition.....	6
WASH	7
Livelihoods.....	7
Implications of fuel shortages on humanitarian response	8
Response capacity	8

ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

If fuel shortages continue, there is a high risk of increase in waterborne diseases, including diarrhoea, cholera, and hepatitis, caused by the lack of adequate water, sanitation, and food. This risk is further compounded by limited vaccination coverage resulting from the distribution constraints caused by the lack of fuel; gaps in disease prevention and control activities; reduced access to health services; and the capacity of health services to function with limited electricity and medical supplies. A shortage of antibiotics and other medicines resulting from supply chain disruptions is also likely to trigger an increase in infections, potentially leading to an uptick in mortality and morbidity rates (UN News 06/04/2026). Humid conditions that favour mosquito breeding are also likely to increase the transmission of vector-borne diseases, especially during the rainy and hurricane season, June–November (KII 09/04/2026; PAHO 03/04/2026).

Disruption to availability and access to basic needs and services will also increase the country's vulnerability to hurricanes, potentially affecting hazard preparedness and response capacities. In 2026, climate forecasts anticipate the hurricane season to be slightly below normal, likely because of El Niño, which is expected to start between July–August and typically suppresses Atlantic hurricane season activity. Even a suppressed season can still produce destructive hurricanes, however (Klotzbach et al. 09/04/2026; CNN 09/04/2025; NOAA 30/05/2014 and 13/04/2026). Hurricanes are likely to increase humanitarian needs in eastern provinces, which already experience low access to health, food, and basic services.

If fuel shortages persist and diplomatic talks between the US and Cuba fail to yield an agreement, protests may continue or expand. Since the onset of the fuel shortage in early 2026, Cuba has experienced increasing protests in response to power outages, food shortages, and deteriorating access to basic services. Past protests in response to limited service access or discontent with the Government have led to arrests, movement restrictions, and communication controls, further limiting people's access to assistance and basic services (The Guardian 04/04/2026; HRW 16/01/2025). According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, approximately 115 protests occurred in the first quarter of 2026, the majority of which took place in March (100) – the highest since reporting began in 2018 – driven by nationwide blackouts, severe fuel shortages, and food and medicine

scarcity (KII 10/04/2026; ACLED 08/04/2026). This level of mobilisation is significant given that a total of 290 protest events were recorded from July 2024 to June 2025. The concentration of protests in eastern provinces – particularly Santiago de Cuba and Granma – highlights the intersection of structural shortages with localised vulnerability, as these areas were among those most severely affected by the 2025 hurricanes. Continued protest activity in Havana also indicates that grievances are not confined to hazard-affected regions (IACHR 31/07/2025; CiberCuba 05/04/2026).

Demonstrations have largely taken the form of cacerolazos (pot-banging protests), which are relatively low-intensity demonstrations of discontent against electricity and food shortages, and spontaneous but systematic gatherings linked to blackouts. In at least one instance, on 14 March in Morón, protests escalated into violence, as demonstrators set the local Communist Party office on fire (KII 09/04/2026; KII 10/04/2026; Reuters 14/03/2026; CiberCuba 14/03/2026). Protesters have been detained and protests have led to an increased security presence (Infobae 01/04/2026; Havana Times 21/03/2026; CiberCuba 05/04/2026).

Reliance on remittances is likely to grow as households struggle to meet basic needs, but the effectiveness of remittances is undermined by power outages that disrupt transactions and the rising cost of living. The economic downturn since 2020 has led to an increase in income inequality, with families entirely dependent on government food distributions and the social security system experiencing hardship as a result of the depreciating peso. Those with access to remittances or foreign currency have previously been able to live comparatively more comfortably in Cuba, with the ability to purchase and access basic goods. The rising cost of food, medicine, and other essentials resulting from shortages means that even those with continued access to remittances from abroad are now unable to cover basic living expenses (KII 09/04/2026; KII 11/04/2026; AFD 02/07/2025; El País 29/07/2024).

Worsening fuel shortages and unmet humanitarian needs are likely to drive further outward migration. Since 2021, the number of Cubans on the island is estimated to have dropped at least 18%, from more than 11 million to less than nine million, because of outward migration. As fuel disruptions continue to undermine livelihoods and employment, including among highly qualified professionals, more people may be compelled to seek opportunities abroad (CFR 31/03/2026; The Economist 19/03/2026; Delgado/Espinosa 08/04/2025). Such migration could weaken local economies, reduce the availability of essential skills, and place additional strain on an already fragile

health system and other sectors. Regional stakeholders have expressed concern about the cross-border implications of Cuba's deepening crisis, such as irregular migration, threats to security, and economic stability across the Caribbean states (The Guardian 25/02/2026; CFR 31/03/2026). Between 2025 and early 2026, mobility patterns from Cuba had already shifted, with growing numbers moving through Latin America and Caribbean-diversified routes, both regular and irregular, in search of livelihoods and basic services. Unlike previous migration waves in which Latin American countries served primarily as transit corridors toward the US, the region has increasingly become a destination for Cuban migrants seeking permanent settlement, particularly in the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Nicaragua, and Uruguay, where Cuban arrivals have surged (KII 10/04/2026; IOM 23/03/2026; ICG 02/03/2026). At the same time, migration could potentially lead to family separation, increasing protection risks along irregular routes, increasing reliance on remittances as a critical coping mechanism for families remaining on the island, and deepening economic dependency.

CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED IMPACTS OF THE BLOCKADE

Health

The health system is experiencing severe disruptions to equipment functionality, service capacity, and the accessibility of care, particularly in more rural and remote areas. Prolonged power outages are affecting the functionality and availability of vital health equipment and supplies, including dialysis machines and ventilators (compromising intensive care units), and destroying cold chain systems for vaccines, blood products, and temperature-sensitive medicine. Critical shortages of medicine and medical supplies further limit operational capacity (UN News 06/04/2026; PAHO 03/04/2026; 14ymedio 06/02/2026; CNN 30/03/2026; HI 26/02/2026).

Health facilities have been forced to cancel surgeries and reduce emergency response capacity. Between January–March, nearly 96,400 surgical procedures were not carried out in the country, including nearly 11,200 procedures for children, as result of the power cuts (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026). At least 46 blood banks have lost operational capacity, diminishing the availability of blood transfusions nationwide (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026). Lack of cold chain systems and transportation challenges

have delayed the national immunisation programme, while antenatal care and deliveries dependent on reliable electricity and transport have also been affected (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026; PAHO 03/04/2026).

The accessibility of the limited-functioning health system is also constrained, as fuel shortages are reducing ambulance services and making it difficult for people in remote areas to reach health facilities. Even when they do, services may be disrupted by power outages, increasing the risk of delayed or inadequate care, resulting in complications, or deteriorating chronic and emergency conditions in rural communities (KII 10/04/2026; NYT 26/03/2026).

The following groups are particularly affected by disruptions to equipment and supply availability, service capacity, and accessibility:

- Around 12,000 chemotherapy patients, 16,000 radiotherapy patients, and 3,000 dialysis patients have experienced disrupted treatment (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026; UN News 06/04/2026).
- Around 30,000 children have not been vaccinated because of the lack of cold chain transportation, increasing their vulnerability to preventable diseases such as diphtheria, measles, mumps, and rubella (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026; UN News 06/04/2026).
- Existing patients requiring continuous treatment for chronic diseases are experiencing interruptions, including around two million people with high blood pressure, one million diabetics, and one million with asthma (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026; PAHO 03/04/2026).
- Over 32,800 pregnant women are facing additional risks and limitations accessing healthcare (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026; UN News 06/04/2026). The number of pregnant women in need of special care may be higher, but there is limited information on rural and geographically isolated areas.

Concurrent dengue fever and chikungunya outbreaks place added pressure on already strained health systems, particularly in Granma, Holguín, and Santiago de Cuba, with hurricane-damaged infrastructure and reduced service availability. In 2025, at least 42,000 cumulative cases of dengue fever and chikungunya were reported, exceeding the previous year's caseload in both magnitude and severity, with greater geographic spread and more hospitalisations by October (RA 08/12/2025; Beacon 10/12/2025). The lack of fuel has affected the distribution of vaccines and

mosquito nets to prevent dengue, increasing the risk of transmission during the coming hurricane season. Leptospirosis – a bacterial disease causing jaundice and meningitis – is also endemic in Cuba and represents an additional concern if communities are forced to use contaminated water sources (see WASH section below), as the disease spreads through contact with water, soil, or food contaminated with the urine of infected animals, which is particularly likely in areas affected by Hurricane Melissa flooding (PAHO 03/04/2026).

The Government has prioritised the little energy available to hospitals, enabling them to maintain some level of operations. During nationwide blackouts, however, hospitals have been forced to use unsustainable gas generators (KII 09/04/2026; NYT 26/03/2026). The health system in eastern Cuba was already struggling to recover from being hit by Hurricane Melissa in October 2025. By December, only 36% of damaged health facilities had been rehabilitated, leaving affected populations reliant on overstretched, partially functional services (IFRC 31/12/2025). If fuel shortages persist, the capacity of the health system will continue to decline, leading to reduced access for both routine and emergency care, including a potential breakdown of specialised services such as dialysis, oncology, and intensive care. This is likely to result in increased complications and adverse outcomes, particularly among high-risk populations such as older adults, pregnant women, and individuals with non-communicable diseases.

Food insecurity and malnutrition

Although information on food security and nutrition remains limited, the impact of fuel shortages on food imports, production, storage, and supply is likely to reduce availability and access, increasing food insecurity across the country (KII 10/04/2026; KII 09/04/2026; TNH 03/03/2026). Cuba relies heavily on food imports, accounting for more than 90% of cereals. Fuel shortages have severely disrupted food imports by hampering port operations, inland transport from docks to warehouses, and cold chain supply for perishable goods (FSIN/GNAFC 16/05/2025; Cubasi 09/04/2026). This is compounded by the impact of the US Government's redesignation of Cuba as a 'state sponsor of terrorism', which has led several banks to halt operations with the country, intensifying constraints on foreign trade (BTI 03/2026).

Limited fuel availability has also disrupted food production at key stages of the agricultural cycle, coinciding with the critical planting season for staple crops such as maize and rice. Fuel shortages have restricted the use of machinery for land preparation and water pumping for irrigation, which is particularly critical given that 72% of irrigated agricultural land depends on electricity or diesel-powered systems (Time 09/02/2026; CP 06/04/2026; OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026). This may lead to reduced planting and below-normal yields for both maize (June–August) and rice (April–July), further constraining food availability nationwide (USDA accessed 07/04/2026).

Hurricane Melissa destroyed at least 100,000 hectares of farmland and disrupted agricultural livelihoods and supply chains, increasing reliance on the already strained La Libreta system (the Government's public food distribution system) which is also likely to see reduced distribution capacity as fuel shortages hit (OCHA 08/11/2025). Longstanding constraints linked to US sanctions have also limited farmers' access to essential inputs such as fertilisers, seeds, and spare parts, leaving machinery inoperable for extended periods (KII 09/04/2026; CP 06/04/2026).

Between 2021–2025, reduced fuel access contributed to a more than 50% decline in domestic food production. This has compounded other food-production vulnerabilities, including outdated farming techniques, high post-harvest losses resulting from inadequate storage infrastructure, and limited access to inputs (KII 09/04/2026; CP 06/04/2026; PAHO 31/03/2026).

Fuel shortages have also disrupted the transport of crops to urban markets, contributing to supply gaps. Delays in delivery cause food to spoil, reducing availability and driving up prices for available goods (KII 10/04/2026). Prices increased by over 13% in 2025 alone, significantly eroding people's purchasing power, especially for around 30% of the population living in extreme poverty – mainly older, rural, and Afro-Cuban populations, who may face increasing challenges affording staple foods (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026; BTI 03/2026). The combined reduction in food production, import, and supply means this trend is likely to continue throughout 2026.

Fuel shortages may also affect dietary diversity and food utilisation, leading to increases in malnutrition, which recently emerged as a major concern among socioeconomically vulnerable populations, particularly in eastern provinces (BTI 03/2026). Child health indicators in Cuba remain relatively favourable compared to regional neighbours but show signs of gradual deterioration. National statistics

indicate that 7–8% of newborns have low birthweight, a key proxy for early-life nutritional risk, lower than in many regional neighbours and highlighting maternal health and nutrition challenges (PAHO 03/04/2026).

WASH

The fuel shortage has significantly disrupted water supply systems across the country, including pumping stations, treatment plants, distribution networks, and water trucks. This has compounded pre-existing challenges to accessing clean water, leading to delayed and disrupted supply cycles and leaving an estimated 33% of the population without safe water services (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026). The impact of the fuel crisis is magnified by the national water system's reliance on 3,300 pumping stations, 87% of which rely on grid electricity to function (NYT 26/03/2026; CiberCuba 26/03/2026).

In 2025, prior to the current crisis, only 61% of the population had access to safe drinking water according to the Cuban National Institute of Water Resources (IPS 28/02/2025). By 6 April 2026, roughly one million people (11% of the population) were dependent on water trucking, a service severely constrained by the lack of diesel, with the Government's distribution of water also severely interrupted (UN News 06/04/2026; PAHO 03/04/2026).

Artemisa, Granma, Holguín, Mayabeque, Pinar del Río, and Santiago de Cuba provinces have been particularly affected by limited water supply since the onset of the fuel crisis. For instance, in Granma, Pinar del Río, and Santiago de Cuba, around 156,000 people are reliant on water tankers that often visit just once a month; in Holguín, nearly 72,000 people receive water supplies at intervals of more than 20 days (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026). Urban centres are also affected, as Havana's water utility entity Aguas de La Habana has confirmed that pumping schedules and supply operations have been disrupted by the lack of electricity (Reuters 20/03/2026; The Strait Times 21/03/2026).

In Matanzas province, prolonged, persistent system failures have left breaks in water infrastructure unrepaired for extended periods, prompting households to adopt coping strategies with potentially harmful consequences, including digging informal wells in residential areas. Rural areas, in general, are resorting to wells and rivers for drinking water because of their more limited access to functioning WASH infrastructure, increasing the risk of viruses such as hepatitis A, gastroenteritis, and

diarrhoea (CiberCuba 26/03/2026). In Santiago de Cuba, where several water systems are no longer operational, reports of faecal contamination suggest increasing public health risks such as hepatitis A, acute diarrhoea, and cholera linked to reduced access to safe water (KII 10/04/2026; CiberCuba 26/03/2026; Kanmony 02/10/2025). The fuel crisis has also prevented the collection and disposal of solid waste, aggravating health risks, including vector-borne diseases (OCHA/UNCT 01/04/2026).

The shortage of fuel has brought garbage collection to a standstill, as trucks are unable to operate. This poses a public health risk as flies have proliferated and environmental contamination has increased, including the pollution of air and potential water sources. Accumulated waste also attracts animals such as rodents, which can spread diseases such as leptospirosis (KII 10/04/2026; France 24 18/02/2026; Reuters 16/02/2026; DW Espanol Instagram 18/02/2026). In response, some communities, mostly in Havana, have resorted to burning waste, further degrading air quality and increasing the risk of respiratory conditions, including asthma and bronchitis. Exposure to contaminated dust and hazardous substances adds to health risks, particularly for sanitation workers and nearby residents (ACI Prensa 10/04/2026; WHO 16/12/2026).

Limited and unreliable water is likely to be affecting household sanitation by restricting basic hygiene practices such as handwashing, cleaning utensils, and safely preparing food, increasing the risk of disease transmission. People living in overcrowded conditions or with limited mobility are likely to face greater challenges accessing water and maintaining sanitation. These impacts were also registered during 2025 water shortages (El Pais 13/10/2025).

Livelihoods

Prior to the current crisis, Cuba's economy was heavily dependent on tourism, which contributed approximately 10% of GDP and employed over 500,000 people directly and indirectly, making it a critical livelihood source for people in mostly western provinces, where tourism is concentrated. Since fuel shortages began, airlines from Canada, China, France, and Russia have ceased operations, and it is unclear whether they will resume in the future (The Guardian 04/04/2026). This has resulted in a sharp decline in tourism compared to pre-crisis levels, severely affecting household incomes (KII 10/04/2026; NYT 04/03/2026). Money derived from tourism also often includes foreign currency, offering some resilience against the weakened peso.

Fuel scarcity is constraining the movement of workers, customers, and goods, disrupting food supply chains and limiting access to business inputs. This has affected both formal and informal markets, reduced opportunities for trade, contributed to rising prices, and eroded purchasing power. These impacts are already being felt by Cubans who have lost jobs in tourism, transportation, and other service sectors (KII 09/04/2026; KII 10/04/2026). In response, the Government suggested that communities could temporarily shift toward alternative activities such as small-scale agriculture and waste collection, although these options provide lower and less stable incomes, further driving economic vulnerability and reliance on coping mechanisms such as remittances, informal community support structures, and migration (CiberCuba 04/04/2026; ICG 02/03/2026; TNH 03/03/2026; UCL 28/07/2025).

IMPLICATIONS OF FUEL SHORTAGES ON HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Limited fuel restricts the movement and access of humanitarian staff and supplies, delaying assessment, distribution, and emergency interventions, particularly in remote areas where 23% of the population live (KII 09/04/2026; KII 10/04/2026; PAHO 31/03/2026; DONARE 28/03/2026). Limited transportation can also hamper data collection, leaving significant information gaps on humanitarian needs at the provincial level (KII 10/04/2026).

Power outages have affected mobile and internet services, hindering coordination between humanitarian responders and potentially affecting early warning and information-sharing systems during hurricane season (HI 26/02/2026). Communication delays between field teams reduce responders' ability to plan and schedule distributions, and disrupt needs assessments and aid disruptions.

RESPONSE CAPACITY

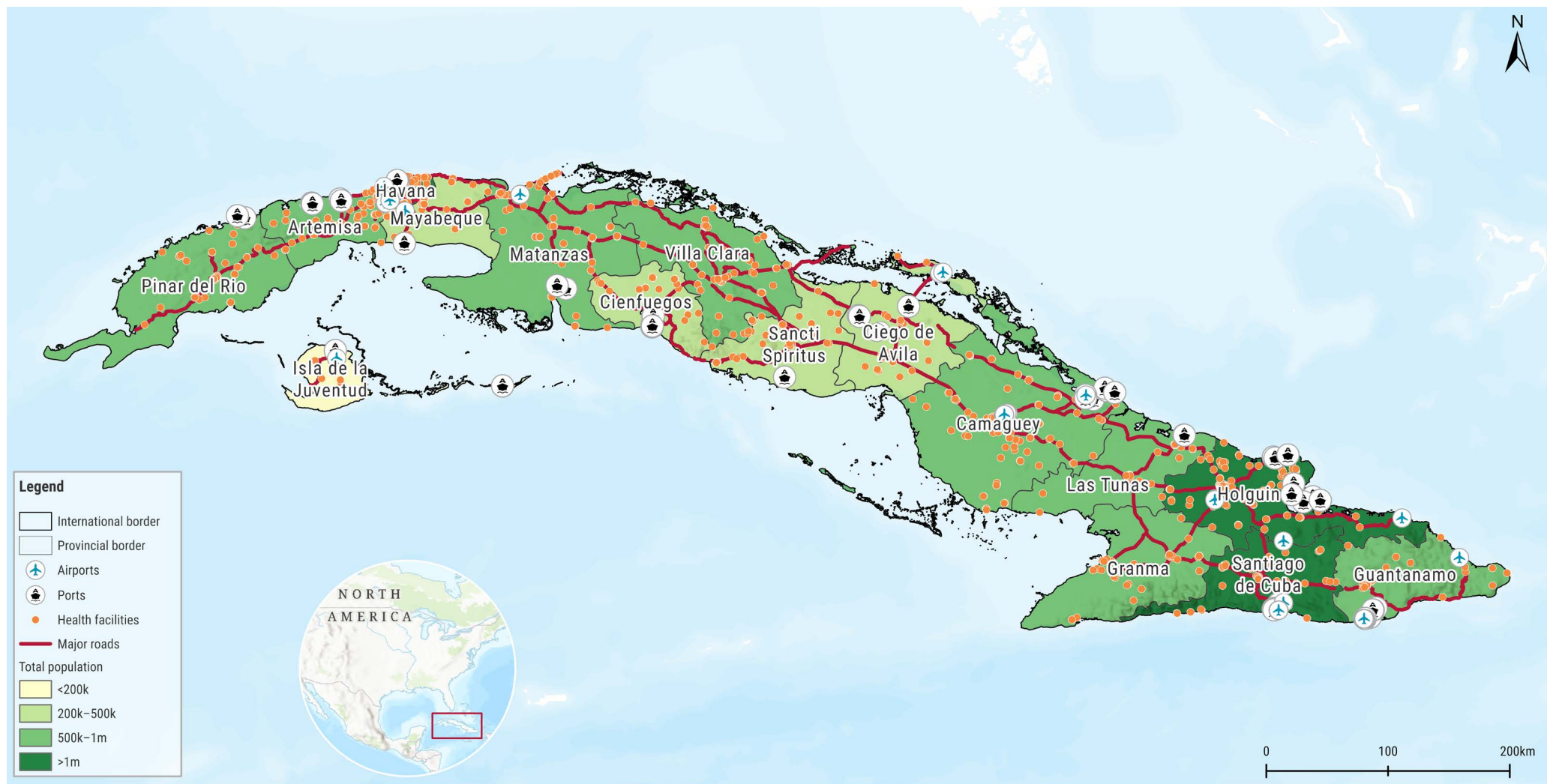
On 1 April 2026, the European Commission announced an additional EUR 2 million in humanitarian funding for Cuba, complementing EUR 4 million previously allocated as part of a EUR 123 million regional package for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECHO 01/04/2026 and 06/02/2026). By 14 April, it remained unclear whether these funds had been disbursed to organisations operating in Cuba or to government partnerships, or which initiatives and regions these funds prioritise.

In terms of external fuel supply, the Cuban Government had approved a limited shipment of approximately 30,000 barrels from the US by 25 March, equivalent to less than one-third of daily national demand (CNN 30/03/2026; Reuters 25/03/2026). On 31 March, a Russian-flagged tanker carrying 700,000 barrels of crude oil expected to provide about 7–10 days' supply docked in Cuba's Matanzas oil terminal. The shipment then had to be transported in small tankers to a refinery in Havana for processing, likely to delay usable supply. This shipment serves only as a partial, temporary mitigation that does not resolve the structural supply gaps necessary to meeting domestic demand. While US authorities have indicated that Russia and other countries may continue supplying oil, they have also maintained the right to seize vessels, creating uncertainty around future shipments and a deterrence effect on third-country suppliers (Reuters 31/03/2026 and 29/03/2026; The Hill 30/03/2026; CNN 30/03/2026; El Pais 31/03/2026).

According to various media reports and expert interviews, China has been donating and installing solar panels in Cuba both in the lead up to and during the current crisis to support domestic electricity generation, but it remained unknown how many solar panels were operational by 14 April (KII 09/04/2026; France 24 04/04/2026; CFR 31/03/2026). These efforts only provide only short-term relief, however, as they do not address structural supply deficits such as import dependency, financing constraints, and sanctions exposure.

China has said it will support Cuba in other ways, announcing an aid package in January that included approximately USD 80 million in financial assistance and a donation of 60,000MT of rice, which amounts to less than 10% of national consumption (CFR 31/03/2026; Cubavision Youtube 29/03/2026; BdF 22/01/2026). By 27 March media reports indicated that at least 15,000MT of rice and other food supplies had arrived, but the flow of assistance remains uncertain and insufficient to address rising needs (CiberCuba 27/03/2026).

MAP 2. POPULATION DENSITY AND KEY INFRASTRUCTURE



Source: ACAPS using data from HDX (accessed 06/04/2026)