



CARIBBEAN: Hurricane Irma & Maria

ETC Situation Report #4

Reporting period 29/09/17 to 10/10/17

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has not been activated in response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Caribbean region. World Food Programme (WFP), in its capacity as global ETC lead, is supporting the response activities coordinated by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), partners Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg and World Food Programme (WFP) continue to support joint efforts in restoring vital Information and Communications Technology (ICT) services following the passage of two hurricanes – Irma and Maria.
- The ETC conducted needs assessments in Dominica and set up Internet connectivity for humanitarians and local populations at seven sites – providing access to over 1,600 responders.



Image showing destruction in Wesley, Dominica after passage of Hurricane Maria. Photo: WFP/Phyza Jameel & Angel Buitrago

Situation Overview

In September 2017, the Caribbean region has been hit by two powerful, category-5 hurricanes – Irma and Maria, which caused vast devastation across many islands, with Barbuda, Dominica, and Saint Martin being amongst the worst-hit areas. The infrastructure in the areas on hurricanes' trajectory was heavily damaged, with severe Internet service and mobile network disruptions. Currently, CDEMA and the governments of the affected islands, alongside humanitarian responders are delivering critical aid and restoring vital services, including telecommunications. The current phase of the emergency is transitioning to a recovery phase as key infrastructure is gradually being restored.



Response

- WFP is closely working with CDEMA supporting its response to the hurricane, and coordinating ETC Partners' activities. The ETC team is currently in Dominica deploying ETC services.
- ETC partners – Ericsson Response, Government of Luxembourg and WFP – conducted needs assessments and deployed Internet connectivity services for humanitarians operating in Dominica: 8x sites in Roseau, and 4x more in Marigot.
- In Roseau, the ETC is providing Internet connectivity services through a local Internet Service Provider (ISP) using fiber.
- In Wesley, Dominica, The ETC has deployed Internet connectivity at the health centre for the use of government officials and affected communities. (Click [here](#) to read the latest photostory, *Connecting the Hurricane-Affected Population in Dominica*.)
- As of 5 October, more than 1,600 responders from United Nations (UN) Agencies, NGOs, governmental entities and local communities, have registered to access ETC Internet connectivity services.
- WFP is working with NGOs, WeRobotics and OpenAerialMap on collecting imagery using UAVs to map the areas in Barbuda and Dominica that have been affected by the recent hurricanes. To date, 7x locations have been mapped in Dominica. Imagery has been made public at openaerialmap.org.

Planned Response

- In Dominica and Barbuda, the ETC is looking into the possibility of setting up charging stations for the use of the affected population.
- The current phase of the emergency response is transitioning to a recovery phase. It is expected that as the infrastructure is being restored, ETC services will be slowly phased down.

Challenges

- Funding for this operation remains a challenge.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference:

Global ETC Information-Sharing teleconferences are held on regular basis, as requested by partners. The next meeting is planned for October, 12 October at 12:00 UTC.

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the ETC website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: Global.ETC@wfp.org



Acronyms

CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
ECHO	European Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	WFP's Fast IT, Telecommunications and Coordination Support Services Team
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
MNO	Mobile Network Operators
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
S4C	Services for Communities
TSF	Télécoms Sans Frontières
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme

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