

Haiti Earthquake

ETS Situation Report #4

Reporting period 04/09/2021 to 08/09/2021

Following the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck southwest Haiti on the morning of 14 August 2021, the Global ETC has been coordinating with its partners globally and on the ground to assess and respond to the ICT needs for the response. While clusters are not activated, national sectors, including the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS), are supporting the government response efforts.

Highlights

- The VHF repeater installed in Les Cayes by WFP with support from emergency.lu and UNDSS to provide inter-agency security communications services has been relocated to improve the radio network coverage. A second relocation is being considered to further improve the service for responders in Les Cayes.
- In Jeremie, a VHF repeater is being installed by emergency.lu and Ericsson Response to provide security communications services for responders. The services are expected to be operational once additional equipment is received from UNDSS and installed by WFP.
- The ETS is working with UNDSS and other UN agencies on the ground to ensure the implementation of security communications services are in line with UN security communications standards and requirements.



A WFP FITTEST technician prepares VHF repeater equipment for installation in Jeremie, south western Haiti.

Situation Update

- A total of 11 sectors – including the ETS – are providing support to the Government of Haiti in the humanitarian response to the earthquake.
- OCHA estimates that as of 3 September, approximately 70,000 families – 46 percent of those estimated to be in need – have received humanitarian assistance.

- Despite some reported damage to infrastructure, local Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) are still able to provide voice and data communications in most areas that had connectivity prior to the earthquake. However, many of the areas in which assistance is being delivered were not connected prior to the earthquake, meaning that responders need access to security communications and data connectivity solutions to support their work. Additionally, due to generally poor connection quality and network congestion, VSAT is required in some locations as a backup for humanitarian and government operations.

ETS Response Activities

- The ETS is coordinating with its partners globally and on the ground to provide common ICT services in support of the response in up to four common operational areas – Jeremie, Les Cayes, Les Nippes and Port Salut. The ETS Dashboard can be viewed [here](#).
- A local ETS Working Group meeting was held on 6 September. The teleconference was attended by emergency.lu, Ericsson Response, Finnish Red Cross (IFRC), Help.NGO, and the IT Disaster Resource Centre (ITDRC). A local NGO, Haiti Participative, also attended seeking connectivity solutions to support their operations. The NGO provides medical services for affected communities in Baraderes, Nippes.
- The ETS is working with UNDSS and other UN agencies on the ground to ensure the implementation of security communications services are in line with UN security communications standards and requirements.
- The VHF repeater installed in Les Cayes by WFP with support from emergency.lu and UNDSS to provide inter-agency security communications services has been relocated to improve the radio network coverage. A second relocation is being considered to further improve the service for responders in Les Cayes.
- In Jeremie, Grand Anse department, a VHF repeater is being installed by emergency.lu and Ericsson Response to provide security communications services for responders. The services are expected to be operational once additional equipment is received from UNDSS and installed by WFP.
- The Disaster Connectivity Map (DCM) for Haiti – available [here](#) – is being updated regularly to show the status of access to connectivity in the country¹. Partners on the ground are encouraged to download the SpeedChecker App (available for [android](#) or [iOS](#)) to anonymously upload data to the DCM platform.
- ETS partners continue to provide support to the Haitian Civil Protection Departmental Emergency Operations Centres (COUDs) through connectivity services already established in the COUD in Les Cayes by Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF), emergency.lu and Ericsson Response, and with a generator provided by

¹ The map is an initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the ETC with support from the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA).

WFP. The ETS has received a request to support the primary COUD² in Jeremie, which suffered physical damage in the earthquake, specifically to assess and improve its solar power system.

- TSF has finalized its mission and will continue to remotely monitor connectivity services implemented in the COUDs and for United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) in Les Cayes and other areas.
- Ericsson Response and most emergency.lu staff departed Haiti on 9 September, leaving one emergency.lu ICT Officer in Les Cayes to provide further IT and telecommunications support. Both organizations have been vital to support the ETS response.

Additional Information

- ITDRC has 14 sites operational across all three affected departments of Grand Anse, Sud, and Les Nippes. Many of these sites are associated with fixed locations such as forward operation bases for medical teams, while others are for mobile teams providing clinics as well as food and shelter distributions in affected areas. As many of these affected areas have no existing communications infrastructure, ITDRC is providing portable Internet solutions, satellite communications, and radio equipment and services to provide responders with a way to communicate and coordinate their resources with very remote field teams.
- Following their engagement in the ETS Working Group meeting, ITDRC is planning to provide a satellite phone and two-way communicators to local NGO Haiti Participative for use by their medical teams deploying to remote locations.
- IFRC continues to operate in Camp Perrin, located 22 kilometres north-west of Les Cayes, primarily supporting IFRC and the Haitian Red Cross teams by conducting assessments, distributions, and training. The IFRC Emergency Response Unit is also supporting the set-up of an Emergency Response Centre (ERC) in Camp Perrin and is identifying a location to set up a repeater for a VHF radio network. Further, IFRC in Les Cayes is setting up an emergency hospital which will require data connectivity from a local provider.
- Emergency.lu continues to support the team providing water purification in Cavillon, Sud, and to support other needs on the ground out of Les Cayes.
- Help.NGO continues to provide connectivity for humanitarian field operations in Sud department.

² This original COUD in Jeremie is located in Jebeau, on the Les Cayes side of the damaged bridge on Route 7 leading to Jeremie. Due to damages and lack of access from Jeremie, a second, temporary COUD within Jeremie city has been established to provide support until the bridge has been repaired. Assistance to the original COUD in Jebeau is therefore required out of Les Cayes.



Meetings

- The next Global ETC teleconference on the Haiti Earthquake will take place on **14 September 2021**.

General Information

- Humanitarian ICT responders supporting the Haiti operation across the region are encouraged to share their contact details with Haiti.ETS@wfp.org to facilitate coordination efforts. A dedicated information-sharing space on activities in Haiti can be found on the ETC website – [Haiti emergency page](#).
- A WhatsApp group has been created to facilitate informal information sharing and coordination among partners on the ground. For access to the group, please contact Haiti.ETS@wfp.org.
- Amid a volatile security situation, convoys travelling from Port-au-Prince must be accompanied by a mandatory police escort. The Logistics Sector is facilitating access to WFP fleet convoys from the capital to Les Cayes. Partners may join the convoy with their own vehicles or use a maximum of seven trucks from the WFP fleet. Requests for this free service should be sent to haiti.logisticsservices@wfp.org at least 48 hours in advance.
- Requests can also be sent to the above email address for the barge service operating between Port-au-Prince and the major towns, including Miragoane, Jeremie and Les Cayes. The barge service provides the safest access to Miragoane without passing through Martissant, where armed groups are active.
- The UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) continues to provide helicopter transport for humanitarian workers. Flight bookings from registered humanitarian organizations should be done online at the UNHAS portal <https://apps3.tflite.com/takeflitepublicwfp/>. For organizations that are not registered, WFP Management can grant one-time access, please contact UNHAS (haiti.unhas@wfp.org) for further details. Commercial airlines also continue to operate.

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