Philippines, Typhoon Rai / Odette

Global ETC Teleconference #5

Date: 20/01/2022 Time: 13:00 UTC

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

For more information or to be added or deleted from the mailing list please contact:

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Attendance

Chair	Brent Carbno	Canada
CDAC Network	Fanman Tsang	United Kingdom
Cisco Crisis Response	Matt Altman	USA
Government of Luxembourg	Bram Krieps	Luxembourg
ITU	Vanessa Gray	Switzerland
	Paul Hamilton	Hungary
MSB	John Isaksson	Sweden
NetHope	Ingolfur Haraldsson	Iceland
	Dagbjartur Brynjarsson	Iceland
	Jason McDonald	Manila
Plan International	Bhavin Patel	United Kingdom
UNHCR	Nizar Zeidan	Denmark
	Min Sun	Denmark
UNICEF	Marta Dabbas Castello	Spain
USAID	Lucia Chile	USA
US State Department	Joseph Burton	USA
WFP	Omar Namaoui	Algeria
	Chiara Ascani	Italy
	Clara Aseniero	Italy
	Patricia Facultad	Italy
	Phyza Jameel	Italy
	Martin Kristensson	Philippines
	Oscar Caleman	Thailand
	Aramais Alojants	UAE
	Caroline Teyssier	UAE
World Vision International	Anthony Kimani	Kenya

Agenda

1. Situation update
2. Global ETC update
3. Partner updates

Minutes

1. Situation update

*   There has been no significant improvement in the connectivity situation since the last Global ETC Partners Teleconference. Progress on the recovery of public telecommunications infrastructure has slowed as network operators tackle more difficult repairs to restore connectivity in the remaining affected areas. Damage to backhaul infrastructure is causing services on many of the islands to be unreliable.

*   The main humanitarian coordination activities in Northern Mindanao are taking place in Butuan City while work is underway to establish a humanitarian hub in Surigao City. On the mainland of northern Mindanao many areas remain without electricity or communications.

*   In Southern Leyte the main humanitarian coordination point is Ormoc City. The humanitarian footprint in this area is expected to increase in the coming days.

*   Many humanitarian organisations are preparing different programme activities on the islands of Bohol , Cebu, and Negros.

*   While ferry services have been restored in the affected islands, not all ports are fully operational and long wait-times have been reported.

*   The fuel supply situation seems to be improving, with reports that fuel is available on Siargao Island along with some of the other islands.
*   Food supply on the islands is also improving, however there are still many people in need on the islands as well as in Southern Leyte.

2. Global ETC update

*   The ETC is planning to establish official ETC connectivity service points at the humanitarian coordination hubs in Maasin City and Surigao City.

*   Humanitarians are already able to access the internet at the ETC-supported government connectivity sites throughout the area of operations, including several sites in Surigao city and at government offices across the islands. In southern Leyte there are not yet any government or humanitarian service points.

*   Many of the relief efforts on Bohol Island are being coordinated out of Alegria on Cebu island, with responders deploying out of Alegria to Bohol on a daily basis. There is one DICT service point on Bohol Island that is accessible to humanitarians.

*   An Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) coordinator from the Global ETC team, two ICT specialists from Ericsson Response and a third ICT specialist from WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team (FITTEST) have arrived in the Philippines and

have been released from quarantine. They join the WFP IT emergency coordinator who is on the ground.

- The ETC team has been gathering usable equipment from the WFP warehouse in preparation for deployment to the field.

- The WFP IT coordinator will travel with the Ericsson Response ICT specialists to Tacloban and Ormoc to meet with humanitarian agencies, and will continue to Maasin city to support the establishment of a humanitarian hub there. If there is a need, the team may continue on to Bohol Island.

- The Global ETC coordinator and FITTEST specialist will travel to Butuan and Surigao City to install a VSAT to provide connectivity to the humanitarian hub being established there.

- The ETC is in touch with OCHA but has so far not received any information about any planned assessments on communication with communities. The Global ETC is ready to support OCHA remotely with any eventual community engagement or connectivity assessments.

- DICT, with support from the ETC, has been providing connectivity services to communities in many of the locations where it has established connectivity across the affected area. They have been limiting a segment of bandwidth on a per-user basis to allow individuals minimal connectivity to send messages. So far there are no measurement tools to be able to estimate the number of users.

- The ETC is working with Ericsson Response to implement a solution for the provision of connectivity to the affected community and to humanitarians that would allow the collection of statistics.

Challenges

- COVID-19 is having a significant effect on the response operations, with most organisations experiencing cases among staff members. Responders are trying to meet only outside or virtually to avoid infections.

- Equipment also continues to be a challenge as regular importation processes have not been lifted. Some specialized equipment is not available on the local market.

- The ETC has been able to get one VSAT cleared through customs and has been salvaging equipment from previous emergencies to complement equipment hand-carried by Ericsson Response.

3. Partner updates

MSB

- MSB has received a request from OCHA for staffing support and may be deploying personnel.

ITU

- The Disaster Connectivity Map data gathering campaign has been stepped down to focus on a 100km radius from Surigao City.

- There was an increase in data points collected on Dinagat Island, Siargao Island and Soccoro Island from 21 to 18 January indicating progress in the recovery of connectivity on the islands. Large gaps in connectivity remain in Northern Mindanao.

NetHope

- NetHope has had a coordinator on the ground since 30 December who has been engaging with various government agencies including DICT and the coastguard.

- NetHope has received requests to establish networks in 23 locations in Cebu Island, Bohol Island, and Leyte. Funding has been secured for the phase 1 plan, which includes providing satellite phones and HF HAM radio kits to several members and establishing networks in five of the requested locations. NetHope will share the list of the remaining locations with the ETC.

- NetHope has been able to secure solar power and satellite equipment on the local market in Manila and can share the contacts of local suppliers and technicians to other partners if required.

The next teleconference meeting will be held on 28 January 2022 at 12:00 UTC

12:00	UTC
13:00	Rome
16:00	Dubai
19:00	Bangkok
20:00	Manila

Acronyms

CERF	Central Emegency Relief Fund
DCM	Disaster Connectivity Map
DICT	Department of Information and Communications Technology
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
FITTEST	Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team
LGU	Local Government Units
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MOVE	Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergencies
MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI	World Vision International

Minutes: Claire Roach, Global ETC Operational Information Management Officer