

The Philippines - Typhoon Rai (Odette)

ETC Situation Report #10

Reporting period: 12 – 18 March 2022

Super Typhoon Rai (Odette) struck the central Philippine islands on 16 December 2021. Since then, the Global ETC has been coordinating with its partners globally and on the ground to support government response efforts and the needs of humanitarian responders through the national ETC, led by the Philippines Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT).

Highlights

- In response to Cyclone Rai (Odette), internet connectivity has been established in 24 sites across the Caraga region—Surigao City, Dinagat Island, and Siargao Island—as well as in Maasin city in southern Leyte.
- Internet connectivity services have been installed in two new shared humanitarian offices on Dinagat Island and Siargao Island. The services will be utilized by four humanitarian organizations—Care International, WFP, Accord, and Action contre la Faim (ACF).
- Meanwhile, connectivity services in the UN common office in Maasin city were deactivated, as national services there are now fully recovered.



Connectivity services are installed on Dinagat Island in a new humanitarian hub used by Care International, Accord, Action contre la Faim (ACF) and WFP. Photo: John Lobaton/WFP

Communications overview

The government and private sector continue their efforts to recover the telecommunications and electricity infrastructure of national providers across the affected areas of Southern Leyte, Northern Mindanao, and the islands in the Visayas regions. Mobile connectivity is now available in most cities across these areas, although further improvements are needed to expand and decongest the services.

Although the recovery of national service providers has been slower on Dinagat Island and Siargao Island, the situation is gradually improving. In some areas of the islands, 3G and 4G data connectivity is starting to become available.

ETC Activities

Coordination

WFP continues to support the Government's Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)—lead of the national ETC—to install new VSAT terminals and maintain existing installations to provide emergency connectivity services across the affected areas.

On 11 March, WFP/ETC participated in an event held by DICT in Cebu which gathered responders in the Cyclone Rai (Odette) operation to debrief, reflect, and look at lessons learned during the response.

Connectivity services

In response to Cyclone Rai (Odette), internet connectivity has been established in 24 sites across the Caraga region—Surigao City, Dinagat Island, and Siargao Island—as well as in Maasin city in southern Leyte. There are approximately 623 daily users of the services including seven UN agencies, six I/NGOs, government staff¹, and affected communities.

Connectivity for government: The ETC has so far supported DICT to establish VSAT terminals for internet connectivity in 14 government sites. This includes one site in Surigao city, seven sites on Dinagat Island², five sites on Siargao Island, and one site in Maasin city in Southern Leyte.

Connectivity for humanitarians: The ETC has established internet connectivity for humanitarians in nine common operational areas across the affected areas, including six sites in Surigao city (one INGO office, one logistics hub, three accommodation sites and one UN office), two sites on Dinagat Island (one accommodation site and one humanitarian hub), and one humanitarian hub on Siargao Island.

The ETC dashboard mapping all the above locations can be seen [here](#).

Maintenance and planning

Internet connectivity services have been installed in two new shared humanitarian offices on Dinagat Island and Siargao Island. The ETC will conduct a follow-up mission to stabilize the services on Siargao Island and to finalize the equipment set up on Dinagat Island. When fully operational, the services on both islands will be utilized by four humanitarian organizations—Care International, WFP, Accord, and Action contre la Faim (ACF).

Meanwhile, connectivity services in the UN common office in Maasin city were deactivated, as national services there are now fully recovered.

WFP/ETC provided BGANs to support two donor missions to Dinagat Island and Siargao Island from 9-10 March by OCHA (CERF) and the Government of Japan. The BGANs supported back-up connectivity for WFP staff during the two missions and will remain on the islands to support WFP emergency connectivity.

Funding

The ETC is 60 percent funded out of a required total of US\$1 million for the response.

Contributions received by ETC include US\$200,000 from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), US\$100,000 from the government of Brazil, and an allocation of US\$300,000 from the OCHA Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Challenges

While ferry services have been restored in the affected islands, not all ports are fully operational and long wait-times have been reported. Accommodation on the islands and throughout the area of operations is still fairly limited.

¹ Office of Civil Defence (OCD), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), and DICT.

² In Pilar, San Benito, Santa Monica, and San Isidro and Burgos.

Normal customs clearance procedures, which can take several months, remain in place for the importation of all telecommunications equipment. Although some of the required equipment is available on the local market, stocks of some specialised equipment are limited or unavailable.

Meetings

A Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **13 April 2022**.

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www.etcluster.org/emergency/super-typhoon-rai-odette-philippines

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