The Bahamas – Hurricane Dorian
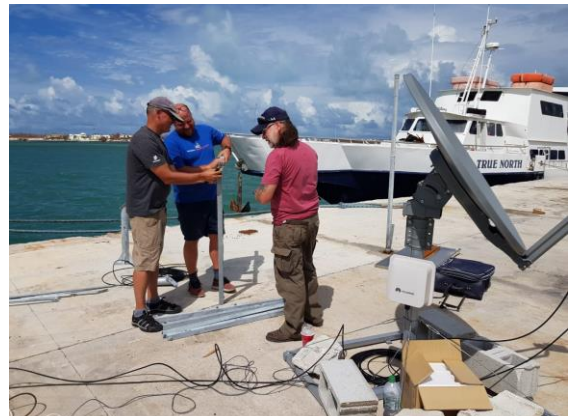
ETS Situation Report #3

Reporting period 10/09/19 to 15/09/19

The ETS is not activated in the Bahamas.

Highlights

- The ETS Coordinator for the Bahamas response is conducting a short mission to Abaco Islands from 12-16 September to assess existing services and identify additional needs.

- Teams from the Government of Luxembourg and the Information Technology Disaster Resource Centre (ITDRC) have arrived in Nassau to support the response and went to Grand Bahama to assess ICT needs together with NetHope.

- Local ETS partners are currently providing connectivity in five priority locations on Abaco island: Marsh Harbour port, Marsh Harbour international airport, the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at a Government building, Maxwell Supermarket used as the military EOC and Marsh Harbour hospital.

ETS partners install connectivity equipment at Marsh Harbour Port, Abaco Island.

Photo credit: WFP/Caroline Teyssier

- More than 180 users have used Internet connectivity services provided by the ETS team across Abaco since the start of the response.

Situation Overview

The death toll from Hurricane Dorian – a category 5 hurricane which struck the northern Bahamas from 1-3 September – has been revised from 43 to 50 with thousands still missing as search and rescue operations continue. The number of evacuees from Abaco Islands and Grand Bahama – the worst affected areas – continue to increase with over 2,000 people located in government-established shelters in Nassau, which are near full capacity. An estimated 90 percent of housing and infrastructure on Abaco Island is damaged or destroyed, with many homes still without power.

The ETC is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies.

UN agencies and humanitarian organizations continue to support the government-led response, under the leadership of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and in close coordination with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).

NEMA's Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) are operational in Nassau, Abaco and Grand Bahama with strengthened support to further coordinate local assessments and delivery of services.

ETS Response

- The ETS is supporting the government response under its National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). WFP is the appointed international lead to support humanitarian organizations operating in Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 on Communications, which is led by the Police Force of the Bahamas with the support of the two Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), BTC and Aliv.

- A Humanitarian Coordination Centre has been established at the NEMA Training Centre in Nassau where NetHope set up Wi-Fi connectivity services for the humanitarians operating there.

- Local ETS partners are on the ground in Abaco establishing critical connectivity services for responders and the affected population in five priority locations in Marsh Harbour:

  o Marsh Harbour port;

  o Marsh Harbour international airport;

  o Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at the Government building;

  o Maxwell Supermarket, used as the military EOC;

  o Marsh Harbour hospital.

- In addition, the team extended the network to Abaco Beach Resort where some humanitarians are staying. An average of 140 users are connected to the Marsh Harbour network on a daily basis.

- Internet connectivity services in Marsh Harbour Hospital were handed over to ETS partners Ericsson Response and NetHope after being set up by Vodafone Foundation.

- Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) provided free five-minute calls for the affected population in different areas of Abaco.

- ETS partners Ericsson Response, NetHope and TSF conducted assessments in Treasure Cay and Fox Town in the north of Abaco island. Assessments confirmed that no shared ICT services are required.

- Coopers Town Clinic in northern Abaco was supported with satellite connectivity set up by Vodafone Foundation for approximately 40 people until the GSM network was restored on 14 September. NetHope has proposed to support with extra capacity as needed.

- To date, NetHope is providing connectivity services in three shelters in Nassau, where an estimated 2,000 people from Abaco island have been evacuated, and an additional two shelters on Grand Bahamas.

- The ETS is supporting MNOs BTC and Aliv by addressing any gaps as they restore their network. This support is being constantly re-evaluated as the MNOs make good progress on re-establishing services. TSF and Vodafone Foundation have carried out an assessment in Abaco and found that 3G networks are back up and running in some areas of the island, including in some remote locations. Aliv has announced that 99 percent of its services have been restored in Abaco as of 15 September. BTC and Aliv established a roaming solution on 10 September for users of both MNOs to access mobile network services in Abaco and Grand Bahama.

- In Grand Bahama, reports have been received of a complete blackout in connectivity on the east side of the island. Emergency.lu and NetHope went to Freeport to assess communications needs at and in support of the EOC established in Grand Bahama. Based on the findings, emergency.lu deployed a portable satellite terminal on 15 September to the High Rock Field Clinic on the east side of the island being run by the International Medical Corps (IMC).

- ETS does not intend to call forward additional support from global partners as current emergency telecommunications resources are sufficient to support the national response. As MNOs are rapidly restoring their GSM network, it is not foreseen that any additional needs for more emergency communications are required at this stage. However, some partners are planning to continue supporting the Bahamas with ICT services and equipment as the response enters the recovery phase.

Challenges

- Operational needs are changing very rapidly in Abaco with reports of hundreds of people being evacuated to Nassau on a daily basis.

- Electricity, fuel and access to clean water remains a big challenge on Abaco.

Funding

- The ETS in Bahamas requested USD130,000 to coordinate and provide initial connectivity services to humanitarians, government and affected populations in up to two locations for one month.

- So far, the ETS has received USD44,000 from WFP's Immediate Response Account to kickstart operations.

- Most resources are partners' personnel and equipment.

Meetings

- The next Global ETS Bahamas Teleconference will be held at 1000 Bahamas time on **Tuesday 17 September**.

Information

- All the information related to the ETS response in the Bahamas can be found on the dedicated emergency page on the ETS website: https://www.etcluster.org/emergency/bahamas-natural-disaster

- Partners that are responding in the affected areas or have relevant information on the Bahamas operation for the wider humanitarian community can share it by emailing Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org.

Key ETC Contacts

Global.ETC@wfp.org

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Acronyms

CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ESF	Emergency Support Function
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
MRE	Meals Ready to Eat
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RNAT	Rapid Needs Assessment Teams
TSF	Télécoms Sans Frontières
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
VHF	Very High Frequency
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	UN World Food Programme

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: Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org

Shared ICT Services

DISTRICT, TOWN	LOCATION	SITE	SERVICE PROVIDER	SERVICES	STATUS	SERVICE USERS
Nassau	Nassau	Training centre	WFP (UN lead), NetHope (NGO Coordination)	Coordination	Provided	Humanitarian community
		Training centre	WFP	Information Management	Provided	Humanitarian community
		Training centre	NetHope	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community
Abaco Island	Marsh Harbour	Port	Ericsson Response, Eutelsat, NetHope, WFP	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community
		International airport	Ericsson Response, Eutelsat, NetHope, WFP	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community
		Government building, EOC	Ericsson Response, Eutelsat, NetHope, TSF, WFP	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community
		Maxwell Supermarket, EOC	Inmarsat, TSF	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community
		Hospital	Vodafone Foundation	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community & affected population
	Treasure Cay	Clinic	Ericsson Response, NetHope, WFP	Assessment	Completed	Humanitarian community & affected population
	Little Abaco	Fox Town	TSF	Assessment	Completed	Humanitarian community & affected population
	Coopers Town	Clinic	Vodafone Foundation, TSF	Internet connectivity	Discontinued	Humanitarian community & affected population
Grand Bahama	High Rock	High Rock Field Clinic	emergency.lu	Internet connectivity	Provided	Humanitarian community & affected population