

Philippines, Typhoon Rai / Odette

Global ETC Teleconference #4

Date: 13/01/2022 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

CDAC Network
Cisco Crisis Response
Government of Luxembourg
ICRC
Intelsat
ITU
MSB
NetHope

Plan International
Save the Children
UNICEF
USAID
WFP

World Vision International

Brent Carbno

Fanman Tsang
Matt Runyan
Bram Kriepps
Dennis Burcer
Tasos Konidaris
Vanessa Gray
John Isaksson
Stephanie Siy
Ingolfur Haraldsson
Dagbjartur Brynjarsson
Jason McDonald
Bhavin Patel
Mark Hawkins
Marta Dabbas Castello
Lucia Chile
Omar Namaoui
Chiara Ascani
Clara Aseniero
Martin Winkler
Patricia Facultad
Amirullah Syarif
Justine Marie Sugay
Martin Kristensson
Maittarizza Pugay
Oscar Caleman
Aramais Alojants
Caroline Teyssier
Arnel Go
Dindo Garcia
Emmanuel Mpango

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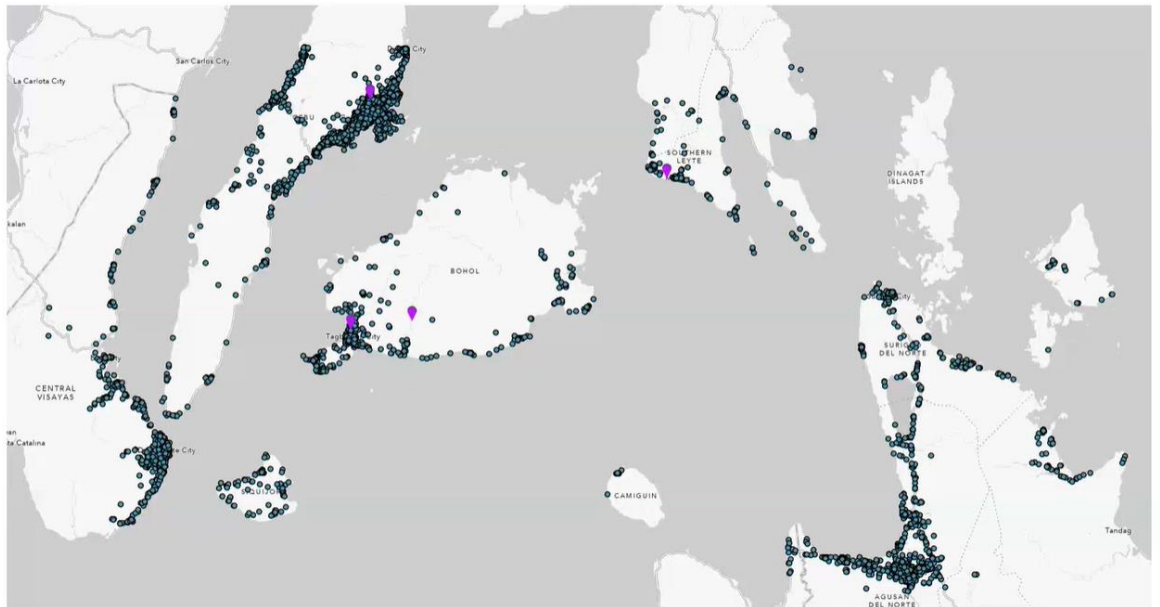
Agenda

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

Minutes

1. Situation update

- OCHA has shared a [comparison](#) of the impacts of Typhoon Odette / Rai with the impact of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. While damage to infrastructure and livelihoods from Odette is on par with the damage caused by Haiyan, the loss of life was much lower and may be attributable to the strong government response and preparedness efforts.
- The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) was on the ground before the typhoon hit with pre-positioned equipment and began providing services to other government agencies in the immediate aftermath.
- There have been several confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst WFP staff and DICT also has staff in isolation due to COVID.
- The government has put in place some COVID-19 related travel requirements and required documentation for deployments to the affected area. There have been mixed reports about how significantly this is affecting movement in the area of operations.
- Ferry services are running between the islands, however not all ports are fully operational. There are long queues to board the ferries as many people are trying to leave the smaller islands.
- Progress on the recovery of public infrastructure has slowed as network operators tackle more difficult repairs to restore connectivity in the remaining areas.
- Damage to backhaul infrastructure is causing services on many of the islands to be unreliable.
- Information on the re-establishment of connectivity services is being gathered from the network operators directly, through DICT, from reports from humanitarians in the field, and through the data collected by the Disaster Connectivity Map developed by the ETC and ITU using GSMA data.
- The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC)'s sitreps include information on the number of municipalities with restored connectivity, however it does not include any further details on the municipalities and their location. According to the [latest sitrep](#), services have been restored in 180 out of 247 municipalities that lost connectivity due to the typhoon.
- NetHope has been gathering information on connectivity gaps based on Facebook data. They also used ITU data to make a map showing the sites where devices have connected to the SpeedChecker app up to 29 December. The data points do not give an indication of the strength or quality of the connection.



Source: NetHope based on ITU data

- Based on this map, it appears that a large part of Bohol island is without connectivity. By contrast, Cebu City is showing many data points.
- Electricity supply continues to be unreliable. Power solutions should be considered along with any connectivity solutions deployed.

2. Global ETC update

- Many humanitarian organisations are now on the ground and have conducted assessments.
- OCHA is planning to establish humanitarian hubs in Surigao City in Northern Mindanao and in Maasin City in Southern Leyte.
- In Maasin City the site for the hub has not yet been selected, however in Surigao City an office has been identified and is now undergoing renovations.
- Some of the organisations planning to move into Surigao City when the hub is established are setting up temporary bases in Butuan City.
- Although there is connectivity available in both Maasin and Surigao City, it is not stable enough to support the hubs. The ETC is planning to provide shared services in both hubs once the sites are established.
- While the eastern islands where the typhoon first made landfall was first prioritized, including Siargo Island and Dinagat Island, the focus of the humanitarian response has begun to shift westward as significant humanitarian needs were identified, especially in Bohol island.
- A number of humanitarian organisations are planning to establish operations on the island of Bohol and the ETC is looking into providing services to support them.
- WFP is continuing to support DICT with the provision of connectivity to support government operations. Four MOVE sets and 14 VSATs are currently providing connectivity in 16 sites across seven cities and islands – Surigao City, Sinalay City, Butuan City, Siargo Island, Dinagat Island,

Socorro Island, and most recently on Bohol Island. A number of microwave links have also been established to extend connectivity coverage.

- All of the VSATs deployed so far are Ku and Ka band. Due to rain fade and congestion with local service providers, there has been some instability with the connectivity provided through Ku and Ka-band VSATs.
- Going forward, the ETC is aiming to establish more robust, permanent services in the sites where it has already deployed, and to also extend services to new locations as required. The focus of the ETC response will now shift from supporting government operations to the establishment of the humanitarian hubs.
- An ICT specialist from WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team arrived in Manila on 13 January to support the ETC response. An ETC Coordinator from the Global ETC team and two ICT specialists from Ericsson Response are expected to deploy soon after on 14 and 15 January. They will join the WFP TEC staff already supporting the ETC response on the ground.
- Regular equipment importation procedures remain in place, under which it can take several months to clear telecommunications equipment. WFP shipped one C-band VSAT from Malaysia to the Philippines to test if it will be possible expedite the customs clearance process. The VSAT arrived in Manila yesterday and so far remains in customs.
- Once there is more information available on the timeframe for customs clearance and on operational needs, the ETC will consider importing additional equipment including C-band VSATs from emergency.lu and additional equipment from Cisco.
- Some equipment, including VSATs, access points, microwave equipment and computer and server equipment, is still available on the local market, however there is a high demand and supplies are expected to run out.
- WFP is beginning to receive some of the K-band VSATs ordered from local suppliers earlier in the response.
- The ETC is engaging with World Vision regarding the staffing support they have offered to assist in the provision of services for humanitarians.

3. Partner updates

ITU

- ITU received a request from DICT for equipment. ITU is currently preparing 25 satellite phones that will be shipped to the Philippines. Due to COVID travel restrictions and quarantine requirements, it was decided not to deploy staff along with the equipment.

NetHope

- NetHope has been asked by member organisations, local NGOs, and local government units (LGUs) to provide Wi-Fi networks in 22 locations on Bohol Island, Cebu Island, and Southern Leyte. Most of the locations are on Bohol Island.
- DICT has made a request for HF radio kits.
- NetHope has also been asked to provide satellite phones by member organisations as well as LGUs.
- NetHope has secured funding for the first phase of its response, which will consist of providing HF radios kits and satellite phones as requested and building Wi-Fi networks to provide internet connectivity for six months.

- Much of the equipment that is required can still be sourced locally. NetHope is looking into whether there will be a need to import any equipment.
- NetHope has additional equipment available in the WFP warehouse in Dubai that could be imported if the customs clearance process is eased.

Cisco Crisis Response

- The Strategic Emergency Response Vehicle (SERV) is finishing its first tour of Bohol Island and returning to Cebu Island for a crew rotation. It has been staffed up until now by Office of Civil Defence personnel.
- SERV is being used primarily to provide connectivity to LGUs, however connectivity has been shared with the local population on several occasions for short periods of time.
- While the vehicle is in Cebu Cisco will upgrade the satellite service from the government-provided 4MB link to a 70MB link as requested by the government.
- Cisco is working with the ETC on securing the equipment to establish 10 networks. The stock of equipment in Cisco's depots in the Philippines is starting to get depleted.
- Cisco is looking into local manufacturing options, however the those would involve extended lead times in the hundreds of days.
- The local Cisco team has offered support with customs clearance for imported equipment through contacts in DICT and the Office of Civil Defence however it is not clear yet if this will be sufficient to expedite the process.
- Cisco will share with the ETC coordinator and NetHope coordinator the contact information of one of their local partners who has been carrying out work on the SERV and have staff experienced with VSAT that may be able to provide support.

Ericsson Response

- Two Ericsson Response ICT specialists will deploy to support the Philippines on 14 and 15 January. They will hand-carry user management equipment including two cradle points. The export paperwork for the equipment has been processed from Sweden and will be coordinated with the WFP team in Manila.

The next teleconference meeting will be held on 20 January 2022 at 12:00 UTC

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

Acronyms

CERF	Central Emergency 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