

# The Philippines - Typhoon Rai (Odette)

ETC Situation Report #2

Reporting period: 25/12/2021 to 30/12/2021

Following Super Typhoon Rai (Odette) that first made landfall in the Philippines on 16 December 2021, the Global ETC is coordinating with its partners globally to support the government response efforts.

## Highlights

- WFP and the Government of the Philippines' Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) mobilized on 13 December, following a request to support government preparedness efforts ahead of incoming Typhoon Rai (Odette).
- Since Typhoon Rai (Odette) hit the Philippines on 16 December, connectivity services have been set up to support government and coordination hubs in six key operational areas – Surigao City, Siargao Island, Dinagat Island, and Butuan City in northeastern Mindanao, as well as Sitalay City in the Western Visayas and Alegria in Cebu.
- The ETC submitted a request to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for US\$225,000 to expand and support connectivity services to the government, humanitarians and affected communities in up to six locations.



WFP supports DICT to configure three VSATs for deployment to Siargao Island and Dinagat Island. Photo: WFP/John Lobaton

## Activities

### Needs Assessments

Connectivity and power services are impacted across all areas devastated by the typhoon. Initial reports indicate that affected populations are without communication and this may take up to six months to fully restore. There is a critical need to provide communications networks in key operational areas to support the humanitarian response.

As per the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) [report](#) on 29 December, only 161 out of 284 cities/municipalities which experienced power outages or interruptions have restored power. 115 out of 371 cities/municipalities which experienced interrupted communications services have restored communication lines.

### *Coordination*

WFP, UN ETC lead agency in the Philippines, is working closely with the Government of the Philippines' Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), national ETC lead, to support them in the response to Typhoon Rai (Odette) and to expand communications services where most needed.

On 13 December, WFP was asked to support government preparedness and response efforts and deployed together with the DICT team. On 17 December, a WFP IT staff member was deployed, together with one of the Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergencies (MOVE) units into the affected area in Surigao City.

The plan is to provide ETC connectivity services in government facilities while connectivity for humanitarians and affected communities is being formalized with DICT.

The ETC Coordinator, a WFP FITTEST specialist and two IT specialists from partner Ericsson Response are waiting for their visa to deploy to the Philippines.

A second Global ETC teleconference was held on 27 December to exchange information with partners.

### *Deployment of services*

The MOVE solution – a set of rapidly deployable emergency communications devices integrated into custom vehicles that enable ICT support in disaster-stricken areas – has been used for the first time in response to the impact of Typhoon Rai (Odette). MOVE is unique to the Philippines, the global prototype having been co-built and co-designed by DICT and WFP emergency telecommunications specialists as part of preparedness efforts over the past two years.

As communications are down across the regions of Mindanao and the Visayas the four MOVE solutions provide a vital communications link between the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), including a communications to Siargao Island and Dinagat Island. Without this system, the complexity of this emergency response would have been much greater.

The four MOVE units are now in use in Surigao City, Sipalay, Alegria, and Butuan City.

DICT is also providing connectivity via VSATs in several additional sites in Surigao City, Siargao Island, Dinagat Island and Socorro Island. One national WFP IT staff has been providing support to pre-configure and install the solutions, providing access to users.

WFP IT has also trained DICT staff in bandwidth management to best allocate capacity to users primarily for work usage, as well as to configure and install equipment including VSAT and microwave links.

Partners Cisco Crisis Response, Ericsson Response and NetHope have confirmed that some equipment (in the Philippines, Sweden and United Arab Emirates) could be mobilized quickly to support user management and distribution of connectivity services.

The Government of Luxembourg has agreed to mobilize three of its VSATs prepositioned in the UAE to the Philippines. Shipment is now pending approvals.

Since the beginning of the data collection campaign on 22 December, ITU has gathered data for the [Disaster Connectivity Map \(DCM\)](#) on an hourly basis. According to the data captured over the past week, there has been a continued lack of connectivity across Bohol and other islands, including parts of

Cebu. From 28 December, ITU is planning to scale down the current measurement campaign from a 250 kilometre radius from Cebu City to a more focused radius across the worst affected areas, mainly concentrated in the South Visayas and northern Mindanao.

NetHope has mobilized an emergency response coordinator, who is expected to arrive in Manila on 30 December, to support NetHope members and other NGOs with ICT solutions. NetHope has also offered to support the ETC operation with equipment prepositioned in the UAE.

WFP has procured additional VSATs to support DICT operations and shipped SIM cards from WFP FITTEST in the UAE for use in satphones which are already in country.

World Vision International (WVI) provided a list of ICT staff in-country ready to support the ETC operation in the Philippines.

## Funding

To carry out planned activities and support the government response, the ETC requires a total of US\$1 million, inclusive of expected in-kind contributions from WFP stand-by partners (SBP). The project and funding requirements are reflected in the [Humanitarian Needs and Priorities](#), launched on 24 December 2021.

To kick-start urgent activities, the ETC has requested US\$225,000 from the Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF). The allocation is yet to be confirmed.

## Challenges

All COVID-19 travel restrictions remain in place, which may impact on the deployment of personnel.

There is limited availability of the required telecommunications equipment in the local market.

## Meetings

The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **5 January 2022**.

## Contacts

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All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website:

[www.etcluster.org/emergency/super-typhoon-rai-odette-philippines](http://www.etcluster.org/emergency/super-typhoon-rai-odette-philippines)

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