

# The Philippines - Typhoon Rai (Odette)

ETC Situation Report #3

Reporting period: 31/12/2021 to 07/01/2022

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 is continuing to scale up its support to the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) in the deployment of connectivity solutions.
- In addition to the four Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergencies (MOVE) units already deployed, WFP has supported DICT with the installation and configuration of 11 Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT) that are now providing connectivity in thirteen different sites spread over seven locations in the affected areas.
- Visa approvals have been obtained for the deployment of four international staff to support the national ETC response. An ETC coordinator from the Global ETC team and an ICT specialist from WFP's Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency Support Team (FITTEST) are preparing to deploy to the Philippines in the coming days. They will be followed by two additional ICT specialists from WFP Standby partner Ericsson Response.



The MOVE unit at the government operations centre in Surigao City.  
Photo: WFP/John Lobaton

## Activities

### *Needs Assessments*

While electricity and connectivity services are gradually being restored across the affected area, many locations remain without power or voice and data connectivity, especially in the eastern islands.

As per the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC)'s 06 January [situation report](#), only 210 out of 284 cities/municipalities which experienced power outages or interruptions have restored power. 77 out of 121 cities/municipalities which experienced interrupted telecommunications services have restored communication lines.

Since 28 December, ITU has refined its data gathering campaign for the [Disaster Connectivity Map \(DCM\)](#) to focus on the worst affected areas in south Visayas and northern Mindanao.

DICT and other government agencies are planning to conduct a post-disaster needs assessment from 7-16 January.

### *International deployment of staff and equipment*

WFP, as the lead UN agency for emergency telecommunications in the Philippines, is working closely with the Government of the Philippines' Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) as they lead the national Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) to support the response to Typhoon Rai (Odette).

In the coming days an ETC coordinator from Global ETC team and a WFP FITTEST ICT specialist are expected to deploy to the Philippines to support the response. Visa approvals have been obtained for two additional IT specialists from WFP Standby partner Ericsson Response.

WFP is also working with DICT to explore options for clearing communications equipment for import into the Philippines. WFP is planning to deploy a C-band VSAT from Malaysia in the coming week and is making arrangements for the shipment of additional equipment from the UAE, including three C-band VSATs from emergency.lu.

WFP has also purchased ten KU-band VSAT's including microwave links and access points from the local vendors. The equipment is expected to be delivered this week and expected to be used to provide connectivity to government offices.

### *Deployment of services*

Following the typhoon, WFP supported DICT to quickly mobilise four Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergencies (MOVE) units that had been pre-positioned in various locations to support government emergency response operations. This marks the first emergency deployment of the MOVE solution, which consists of a set of rapidly deployable emergency communications devices integrated into custom vehicles that enable ICT support in disaster-stricken areas. The MOVE units are currently deployed in support of DICT operations in Surigao City, Butuan City in northern Mindanao, Alegria on Cebu Island, and Sipalay in Negros Occidental.

DICT, with support from WFP has also installed KU- and KA-band VSAT's in 13 sites across seven key response locations, namely Surigao City, Sipalay City, Alegria, Butuan City, Siargao Island, Dinagat Island, and Socorro Island.

Since the typhoon hit, WFP has had a staff member deployed to support DICT. The member been a part of their assessment, planning, and supported the configuration and installation of equipment. The ETC plans to expand services to humanitarians in these locations and in new sites as required to meet interagency needs as more international responders begin to arrive in the country. The last intercluster coordination meeting was held on 03 January, at which OCHA shared that it is planning to establish humanitarian hubs in Maasin City and Surigao City.

Due to rainy weather conditions, there have been issues with the reliability of the coverage of the deployed K-band VSATs. The Global ETC and WFP are working to deploy C-band VSATs pre-positioned in the UAE by the Government of Luxembourg in order to provide more reliable coverage.

DICT has also faced issues with bandwidth and user management of VSAT connectivity. Cisco Crisis Response has offered to provide user-management equipment that is available in-country to assist DICT in the provision of services to the affected population.

NetHope deployed a coordinator to the Philippines on 30 December, and has received 12 requests for support from its members on the ground. NetHope is currently assessing a request from the government to provide connectivity to schools in Southern Leyte to be able to upload e-learning content and allow the continuation of remote learning. The government has also requested NetHope support with the repair of a damaged radio tower in Cebu.

The ETC is exploring local options to increase staffing on the ground to meet the needs of the response. WFP IT staff on the ground have been working to boost the capacity of DICT staff by providing training on VSAT and microwave link installation and bandwidth management. World Vision International has several ICT staff in country that have offered their support to ETC operations.

## 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).

## Challenges

While the government has begun to issue a limited number of visas for humanitarian responders, COVID travel restrictions continue to limit the number of international staff that can deploy to the Philippines. Quarantine requirements for responders have been reduced to 5 days for those travelling from countries on the Philippines' "yellow" list, and three days travelling from "green" list countries.

Regular processes continue to apply for the importation of telecommunications equipment. There is limited availability of the required telecommunications equipment in the local market.

## Meetings

The next Global ETC Joint teleconference will take place on **12 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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