

The Philippines - Typhoon Rai (Odette)

ETC Situation Report #9

Reporting period: 5 – 11 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

- The ETC is supporting the government's Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) to provide connectivity services for government responders in 14 sites and for humanitarians in seven common operational sites across the areas affected by Typhoon Rai (Odette).
- From 7-8 March, WFP/ETC deployed with DICT to Dinagat Island to perform maintenance and repairs on equipment in Basilisa Municipality, to improve connectivity services for government responders there.
- The ETC deployed to Dinagat Island and Siargao Island from 9-11 March to install equipment in preparation for the delivery of connectivity services in two new humanitarian hubs for Care International, Accord, Action Against Hunger (ACF), and WFP.



ETC installs an access point for connectivity in the new humanitarian office shared by Care International, Accord, ACF and WFP on Dinagat island, San Jose Municipality. Photo: ETC/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.

The recovery of national service providers has been slower on Dinagat Island and Siargao Island, due to the additional geographical challenges of island telecommunications infrastructure. In many areas of these two islands, there is still no data connectivity and only very limited 2G coverage.

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.

Connectivity services

Across the affected areas, 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 Island¹, five sites on Siargao Island, and one site in Maasin city in Southern Leyte.

Further, the ETC has established internet connectivity for humanitarian in seven common operational areas across the affected areas, including five sites in Surigao city (one INGO office, one logistics hub, two accommodation sites and one UN office), one accommodation site on Dinagat Island, and most recently, one UN office in Maasin city.

In total, internet connectivity has been established to support government and humanitarian responders in 21 sites across the affected areas, with a daily average of 105 users. Users include UN agencies, I/NGOs, government staff², and affected communities.

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

Maintenance and planning

From 7-8 March, a WFP/ETC Philippines technician deployed with DICT to Dinagat Island to perform maintenance and repairs on the VSAT in Basilisa Municipality, to improve connectivity services for government responders there.

Preparation is underway to establish internet connectivity services for humanitarian in a further two planned sites—common operational offices on Dinagat Island and Siargao Island. An ETC staff member deployed to both locations from 9-11 March to set up the connectivity network. When operational, the services will be utilized by four humanitarian organizations—Care International, WFP, Accord, and ACF.

The ETC is providing portable satellite connectivity terminals (BGANs) to support two donor missions to the Philippines, carried out by OCHA and the Government of Japan. The two delegations will travel to Dinagat Island and Siargao Island from 9-10 March. The BGANs will support back-up connectivity for WFP staff during the two missions, if required.

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

Due to rainy weather in Northern Mindanao, mobile network and microwave links are unstable in this area. Frequent electricity outages, especially in Surigao City, pose a challenge for the provision of stable connectivity.

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 very limited.

¹ In Pilar, San Benito, Santa Monica, and San Isidro and Burgos.

² Office of Civil Defence (OCD), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), and DICT.

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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