



CLUSTER SNAPSHOT



>4,000

humanitarian workers are using ETC internet services across all locations

As of 16 December 2013

OVERVIEW

Typhoon Haiyan swept through the central Philippines on 8 November, killing over 6,000 people, displacing some four million (including 789,000 children), and destroying national telecommunications in the affected area.

With no confirmed timeframe on the restoration of these services by national operators, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) was activated to provide security

communications, Internet connectivity and coordination services to the humanitarian community.

With WFP as the lead agency, ETC partners, including emergency.lu, Ericsson Response, MSB, IrishAid, Save the Children, Plan International, OCHA, GSMA, Global VSAT Forum and NetHope (and their partner BT), are supporting the provision of shared communications services with personnel, equipment, information and operating space. ETC activities are expected to continue for the next six months, after which, it is hoped, the national telecommunications infrastructure will be restored.

URGENT HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

The availability of reliable, independent data and voice communications services was recognized as a priority. It is not possible to coordinate a humanitarian response effectively without reliable communications.

CLUSTER RESPONSE

An ETC response team was deployed within 24 hours of the disaster to provide emergency communications services to the humanitarian community. The team included an ETC Coordinator and an ETC NGO Coordinator to engage with the NGO community on service requirements and provision.

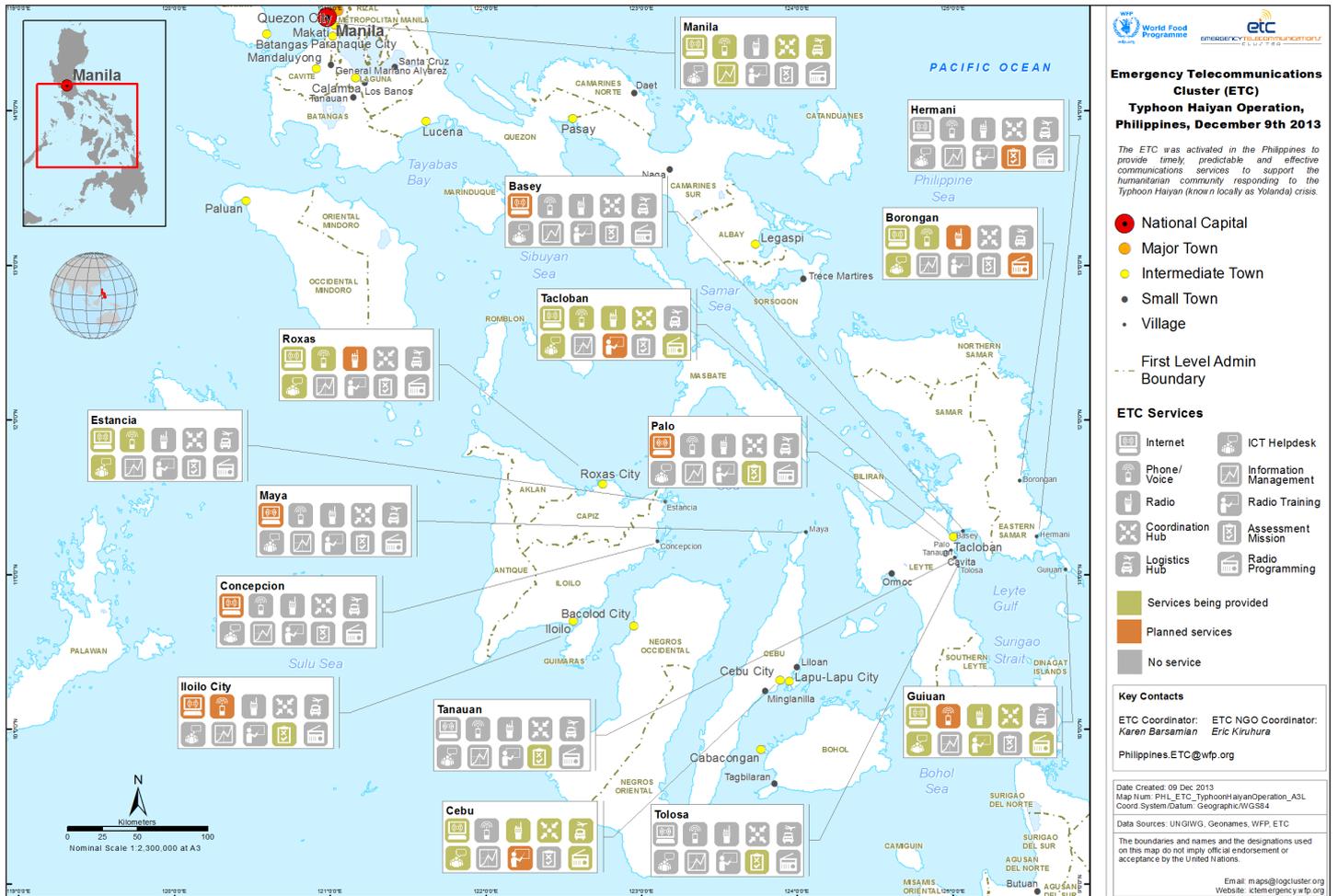
The ETC is providing voice and internet connectivity, radio telecommunications, ICT helpdesk and coordination services to the humanitarian community across Borongan, Cebu, Estancia, Guiuan, Roxas City and Tacloban. It is also providing backup power supply services on a best-effort basis.

The ETC is also liaising with local authorities to import emergency ICT equipment and approve any licenses that may be required. Over 3,700 humanitarian workers have registered to use ETC internet services across operational hubs in the Philippines and this is increasing every day. In addition, the ETC has supported the installation of Internet connectivity at local government offices. In partnership with NGO consortium NetHope, the ETC has deployed additional equipment to provide Internet connectivity in five additional locations.



Response to Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)

17 December 2013



CHALLENGES

Extensive damage to electrical grids in affected areas continues to pose challenges for the ETC. Alternative power supplies, such as generators and solar panels, are required to ensure continued provision of IT and telecommunications services. Power surges can also severely damage ICT equipment. Access to fuel is also a problem in certain areas, restricting the use of generators. Telecommunications problems are also affecting implementation of crucial cluster activities such as disease surveillance across Region VIII.

Background on the crisis

Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) swept through the central Philippines on 8 November, killing nearly 6,000 people and displacing some 4 million people, flattening homes and damaging schools, health centres and other infrastructure. Some experts estimate the storm was among the strongest ever to make landfall. Over 100,000 people were still in evacuation centres five weeks after the storm.

On 9 November, the Government accepted the UN offer of international assistance. The Government also welcomed the deployment, in the initial phase of disaster response, of a large number of countries' military assets. The humanitarian community's one-year Strategic Response Plan calling for \$791 million has been released and is closely aligned to the Government's Yolanda Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan, due to be launched on 18 December.

Cluster lead agency / co-lead agency

Office of Civil Defense / WFP

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