

Haiti Earthquake

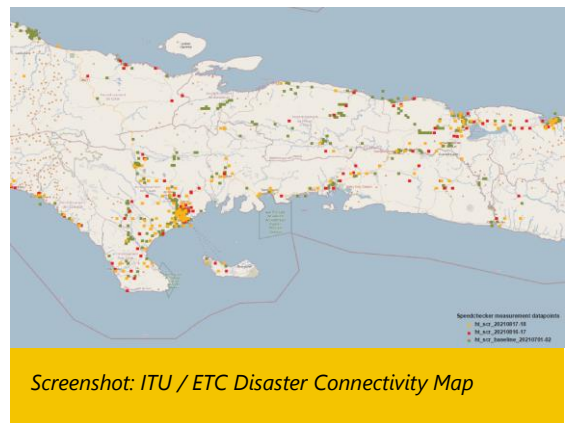
ETC Situation Report #1

Reporting period 14/08/2021 to 19/08/2021

Following the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck southwest Haiti on the morning of 14 August 2021, the Global ETC has been coordinating with its partners globally and on the ground to assess any ICT support required for the response.

Highlights

- Voice and data communications are still working in most areas despite some damages to infrastructure sustained in the earthquake. The connectivity situation at the epicentre is still unclear.
- Local partners are mobilising on the ground to assess the situation, and staff have been deployed from several global partners to provide further ICT assessments and support.
- Access to the affected areas is challenging due damaged and blocked roads as well as security concerns along the route from the capital. More information on the ICT requirements for the response is expected to come soon as responders reach the affected areas.



Screenshot: ITU / ETC Disaster Connectivity Map

Situation Update

- At 08:30AM local time on 14 August, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck southern Haiti, heavily impacting areas in the department of Les Nippes. OCHA estimates that 1,400 have died and more than 6,900 may be injured. The Haitian civil protection agency reports that more than 37,300 homes have been destroyed and 46,000 are damaged.
- The immediate focus of the humanitarian response has been on search and rescue efforts, medical care and the provision of food and temporary shelter ahead of the arrival of tropical storm Grace on the evening of 16 August. Despite heavy rains, additional damages from the storm were limited. Some roads that had been cleared following the earthquake are blocked again by storm debris.
- The Haitian Government is working on clearing roads to the affected area which were damaged in the quake. There are also significant security concerns due to the threat of gang violence along the route

between the capital and the affected area. The security situation in the country is generally volatile due to recent political events.

- The UN Humanitarian Air Services has one helicopter available that is transporting medical teams to the affected area. WFP is also operating a barge services for cargo and vehicles from Port-au-Prince to the south.
- Local airports and commercial aircraft are operating, however capacity is very limited.
- Accommodation is also very limited, with many hotels having been affected by the earthquake.
- Electricity supply in Haiti is generally unstable, requiring back-up power supply under normal circumstances. Supplying fuel for generators can also be a challenge, especially if it is required to transport fuel from the capital to the affected area.
- Some broadcast radio stations are still running including Radio Lumiere, a religious radio station that also provides community news and information.
- There is currently no UN radio network for security communications in the south of Haiti.
- Despite some reported damage to infrastructure, local Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) are still able to provide voice and data communications, but with increasingly poor connections quality and dropped calls being reported near the affected areas. The situation closer to the epicentre of the earthquake is unclear.
- The National Centre for Emergency Operations (COUN) has been activated and is coordinating the response on the ground. No official request has been made for international assistance at this time.

Response Activities

- USAID is deploying a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to support damage and needs assessments in coordination with the Government of Haiti and humanitarian partners.
- UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) has deployed a team to support assessment coordination, and search and rescue efforts.
- Patrick Midy, WFP Haiti Head of TEC, is supporting initial interagency ICT coordination on the ground.
- Local partners World Vision Haiti and UNICEF have mobilised staff on the ground to assess the situation in the affected areas.
- Télécoms Sans Frontières deployed a team of 3 staff along with satellite equipment on 17 August. TSF has also shipped a VSAT to Haiti separately which the team plans to install upon arrival.
- WFP has deployed a FITTEST (Fast Intervention Team) specialist to conduct a telecommunications assessment beginning on 18 August.
- Finnish Red Cross is planning to deploy staff with VHF equipment on 20 August.



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- MSB, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, is supporting a European Union team deploying to Haiti with IT personnel and equipment and accommodation.
 - NetHope is ready to deploy a team once telecommunications assessments have been completed and it can be identified where connectivity is needed.
 - Two flights are planned from WFP Regional Bureau in Panama to Haiti which may be able to accommodate equipment from ETC partners upon request.
 - The first interagency ICT meeting on the ground took place on 18 August.
 - A meeting with UNDSS took place on 18 August to discuss the potential establishment of a VHF network for humanitarian security communications in the southern region.
 - The Disaster Connectivity Map for Haiti, available [here](#), is being updated hourly to show the current state of the telecommunications network in the country. The map is an initiative of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the ETC with support from the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA).

Meetings

- The next Global ETC teleconference on the Haiti Earthquake will take place on **19 August 2021**.

Information

- Humanitarian ICT responders supporting the Haiti operation across the region are encouraged to share their contact details with global.ETC@wfp.org to facilitate coordination efforts.
- A dedicated information-sharing space on Haiti can be found on the [ETC Haiti Operation page](#).

Contacts

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