Hurricanes Irma and Maria – Meeting Minutes

LOCATION: St John’s, Antigua and Barbuda
DATE: 25 September 2017
CHAIR: WFP, Logistics Sector lead
PARTICIPANTS: Antigua and Barbuda Search and Rescue (ABSAR), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC), ETC, Cisco, DFID, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), UNICEF, WAITT Institute Barbuda

ACTION POINTS: • The Logistics sector to continue exploring shipping options to Dominica and the British Virgin Islands and coordinate with organisations in need of cargo consolidation support.

AGENDA: 1. Situation update and humanitarian response
2. Logistics gaps
3. UNHAS air service

1. Situation Update and Humanitarian Response

Dominica

• The Chair shared the latest updates reported by CDEMA on logistics infrastructures and access in Dominica:
  o The runway at Canefield Airport has been cleaned and is being used to bring in relief commodities/emergency airlifts. No reliable electrical power is available. Roof of air control tower, terminal building and firehall station were severely damaged.
  o Douglas Charles Airport has received Civil Aviation Authority permission to operate during daytime; telecoms not operational and electricity supply replying on backup generators. Roof of air control tower, terminal building were damaged.
  o Access has improved slightly, with roads from Roseau to Portsmouth, from Portsmouth to Marigot and Capuchine now clear and usable. The two bailey bridges on the west coast are still down.

• Main needs reported by authorities include: water and water containers/bladders, food, 5Ka and 10Ka generators, fuel, matrasses, tarpaulins, plastic sheets, kitchen sets and stoves, and other building/rehabilitation materials.
• Reports indicate also that several communities on the west and southern parts of the country remain cut off and didn’t receive assistance. Efforts are underway to evacuate those affected via helicopter. The stadium in Roseau is being used as reference point for evacuation activities.

• WFP has deployed two Mobile Storage Units (MSUs), together with generators, pallets and plastic sheets, to be erected at Canefield Airport. One additional unit will be deployed to be established at Melville Airport.

• ETC confirmed that connectivity is being provided to the stadium area as well as to the hospital complex. The main issue remains the lack of electricity. VSAT equipment is being sent to Melville Airport to establish connectivity.

Barbuda

• An assessment conducted on 24 September in Barbuda confirmed that some cleaning activities are being implemented. Space will be used to set up community and primary care centres. Airport is reportedly operational but would still require some repairs, especially regarding the fencing. A lack of generators to ensure power supply continues to be reported.

• A clinic is being set up next to the hospital by the Red Cross and will be operational within a few days; medical stocks and consumables need to be dispatched. ABSAR confirmed that support can be provided and will coordinate with the Ministry of Health.

• ABSAR also informed that repeaters for VHF radio have been installed and will allow radio communication for humanitarian staff operating in Barbuda.

• Ferry service has resumed and is travelling on a daily basis from Antigua to Barbuda. Interested organisations will need to notify NODS. Additional clearance is required for overnight.

2. Logistics Gaps

• In Dominica, rehabilitation of main infrastructures and road access along with logistics augmentation in the main entry points is a priority. Lack of electricity and fuel remains a main bottleneck.
• UNICEF and PAHO are looking at sending relief items from Antigua to Dominica, as well as to the British Virgin Islands. The chair confirmed that several options are being explored for cargo consolidation and transport for both location, including military and commercial assets. WFP is yet to determine whether a cargo plane can be mobilized in the region, based on humanitarian organisations’ need, to assist with the dispatches. A helicopter is being relocated from the Dominican Republic to be able to serve hard-to-reach locations in Dominica with 1 mt cargo capacity.

• Regarding the storage facility at St John’s airport, humanitarian actors will need to communicate directly with the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS) to clear the receipts and dispatches.

3. UNHAS Air Service

• UNHAS air service schedule is being adjusted based on needs and booking requests received daily. Humanitarian organisations are encouraged to use and send the booking requests as early as possible.

• All forms are available online at: http://www.logcluster.org/sector/irma17.

The next Logistics Sector coordination meeting is planned for Wednesday 27 September at 11:00 in St John’s.

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