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Hurricane Dorian The Bahamas Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4



Reporting Period: 25 September to 22 November 2019

Highlights

- A total of 69 fatalities have been confirmed after Category-5 Hurricane Dorian hit Abaco and Grand Bahama islands on 1 September, and 4,861 evacuees have been registered by the Department of Social Services.^a Nevertheless the number of evacuees is estimated to be much higher as some used private transport to evacuate to Eleuthera and the United States.^b Dorian destroyed informal settlements in Central Abaco leaving these communities in a very vulnerable situation.
- The number of people in official shelters has decreased from 1,957 people as of 20 September, to 589 people in two shelters as of 13 November.^c Partners in the field have observed increasing numbers of people returning in parts of Abaco, while some families have decided to split temporarily, leaving children and women in shelters in Nassau.
- In Abaco, out of 21, six public schools have reopened with 651 students attending, while in Grand Bahama 18 schools, out of 22, have reopened.^d UNICEF has distributed recreational kits in four of the reopened schools in Abaco and ten more in Grand Bahama. Additionally, UNICEF is supporting debris removal, mold remediation, sanitation and light repairs in four public schools in Grand Bahama.
- The Water and Sewage Corporation (WSC) has been working diligently to restore piped water distribution in Abaco and currently five out of ten operational systems are running, although intermittently. Therefore, quantity and quality are not ensured throughout the day. WSC is working in collaboration with UNICEF and WASH sector partners to improve the networks and to reduce the risk of future failure through the procurement of emergency equipment, including generators.
- Through UNICEF-supported actions, recreational kits are being distributed in schools in Abaco and will benefit at least 3,000 students. Additional school supplies have been distributed to authorities and will benefit 6,000 school-aged children and 4,000 children under 6 years old.
- Aiming at building capacities to provide psychosocial support services in emergencies, 60 volunteers have been trained in Nassau and Grand Bahama, with UNICEF support.
- UNICEF has recently signed an agreement with Water Mission to build back better the water supply system of Marsh Harbour city on Abaco island, through solarization of the wellfield and pumping station. The restored system will benefit over 12,000 people monthly and around 1,220 children who will be provided access to safe water in schools, temporary learning spaces and other child-friendly spaces.
- UNICEF has revised its appeal to US\$3.5 million, to ensure full implementation of resources by mid-December 2019, with key partnerships identified in Education, Child Protection and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sectors. The total requested amount has been received via generous contributions through UNICEF's National Committees in the United States, the Netherlands, Denmark, France and the United Kingdom.

Situation in Numbers



+5,500

Estimated No. of people evacuated in Nassau. (OCHA, 4 Oct.)



4,861

Evacuees registered by Min. of Social Services. (NEMA, 18 Oct.)

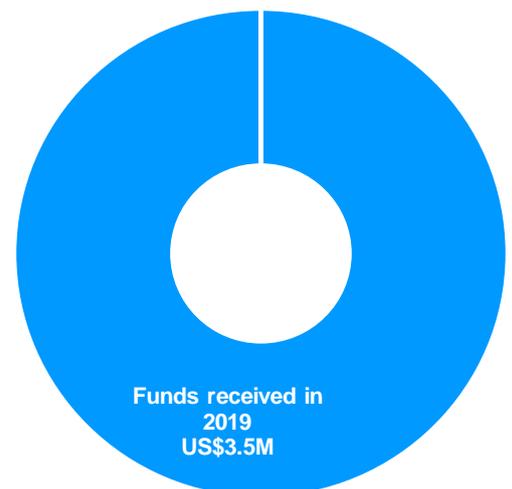


589

No. of people in official shelters. (NEMA, 13 Nov.)

UNICEF Appeal Sept - Dec 2019
US\$ 3.5 million

Funding Status (in US\$)



a. NEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian - The Bahamas weekly stats', 19 November 2019 / 28 October 2019.

b. ECLAC, IDB, WHO/PAHO, 'Assessment of the Effects and Impacts of Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas', November 2019.

c. NEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian - The Bahamas daily stats', 20 September 2019; IOM, 'Affected population in collective centers and private housing in New Providence', 13 November 2019.

d. As per reports shared by local Education authorities.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

During the first two months after Hurricane Dorian hit The Bahamas leaving massive destruction over Abaco and Grand Bahama islands, UNICEF identified and built critical partnerships to enable the implementation of emergency relief and recovery actions, as well as to provide critical support for strengthening the capacities of the Bahamian authorities in the sectors of Education, Child Protection and WASH.

Based on the current demands and the existing capacities in country, including from a diverse group of NGOs, civil society organizations, private sector and Government, UNICEF has revised its appeal to US\$3.5 million, to ensure full implementation of resources by mid-December 2019. As of 15 November, the total appeal has been covered. Generous contributions from private donors and individual donations channelled through UNICEF's National Committees in the United States, Netherlands, Denmark, France and the United Kingdom have enabled UNICEF to advance in the implementation of its response plan. As the situation and needs are still evolving, UNICEF will continue to monitor the situation of children and incorporate changes to its response lines if needed.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

After Category-5 Hurricane Dorian struck Abaco and Grand Bahama, as many as 5,500 people were evacuated to Nassau in New Providence island,¹ many more fled to other islands or left the country.² A total of 69 fatalities had been confirmed as of 19 November³ and 4,861 evacuees had been registered by the Department of Social Services as of 18 October.⁴ Dorian also destroyed informal settlements in Central Abaco, leaving these already vulnerable communities in a precarious situation, including undocumented migrants -many of them fearing deportation. Although the current number of missing persons is yet to be confirmed, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) reported that 876 missing persons had been found alive by 18 October, but the figures will change as the list of missing persons is cross-checked against shelter lists and other records.⁵

In the capital Nassau, the number of people in official shelters has decreased considerably from 1,957 people in nine official shelters as of 20 September,⁶ to 589 people in two shelters as of 13 November.⁷ Although there is no official census of population returning to the affected islands, humanitarian partners in the field have observed increasing numbers of people returning to parts of Abaco. Some of the evacuee families have decided to split, with men returning to their places of origin to take care of the family's properties while women and children stay in shelters. The most disadvantaged of them are in search for additional income in reconstruction works. Moreover, IOM reported that by 13 November an additional 865 people were being sheltered in private housing, while 46 evacuated children were hosted in children-only collective centres.⁸ Authorities have grouped evacuees in a reduced number of official shelters. A plan for joint support to mass shelters has been prepared by partners and authorities to ensure that sites are equipped to meet the increased demand for services for an extended period of time.⁹

In Abaco, as of 6 November, local authorities reported that six public schools had been reopened,¹⁰ with 651 students attending, mainly in North and South Abaco, as well as in some cays where damages were less severe. The number of children back to school is expected to increase gradually as more families are beginning to return to certain areas of Abaco. Some of the students of closed schools are attending classes in community buildings including libraries and churches due to extensive damage to school buildings. Given the considerable damages in high schools' infrastructure, all high school students in Abaco are attending classes through distance learning, with frequent internet outages challenging their learning progress.

In Grand Bahama, district education authorities reported that out of the 22 public schools in the island, four were completely destroyed and 18 had partial damages. All schools, except the four completely destroyed, were reopened. Children of the four closed schools were integrated into existing open schools. Moreover, the Ministry of Education (MoE) reports that 1,500 students have been placed in public schools throughout New Providence and the Family Islands so far, while an undetermined number of students remain unregistered.¹¹

Although the water network in Grand Bahama is back in operation, the salinity of water in the wells is still high as fresh water aquifers were infiltrated with salt water. The water currently provided by the network is not safe for drinking but can be used for bathing and household hygiene. Drinking water is currently provided by a number of INGOs, civil society organizations in the field, including church groups, via water treatment plants (reverse osmosis) and water trucking

¹ OCHA, 'Bahamas - Hurricane Dorian: One Month After', 4 October 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2nMm6vW>>

² ECLAC, IDB, WHO/PAHO, 'Assessment of the Effects and Impacts of Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas', November 2019, <<http://bit.ly/33jSgxF>>.

³ NEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian - The Bahamas weekly stats', 19 November 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2D4tAyh>>

⁴ NEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian - The Bahamas weekly stats', 18 October 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2oZfawc>>

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ NEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian - The Bahamas daily stats', 20 September 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2mv8t3n>>

⁷ IOM, 'Affected population in collective centers and private housing in New Providence', 13 November 2019.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ IOM, UNHCR, CCCM Cluster, 'Mass Shelter – Humanitarian Support Proposal', 21 October 2019, <<http://bit.ly/340c9Ky>>

¹⁰ Amy Roberts, Cherokee Sound, Crossing Rocks, Fox Town, James A. Pinder, Moore's Island.

¹¹ Ministry of Education - The Bahamas, 'Press Release - Re: MOE Post Hurricane Dorian', 28 October 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2Jz4fQA>>

provided in jerrycans (5 gallon). Bottled water is available in some of the local markets that have reopened, but mainly from imported brands as only one out of 12 local companies has resumed production, and two other local companies have requested the Environmental Health Department to appraise them before resuming production. The Grand Bahama Utility Company is in the process of drilling freshwater wells for provision of potable water, and it is anticipated that in February-March 2020, will be in position to provide sufficient water for domestic use, as well as for businesses.

The Water and Sewage Corporation (WSC) is making progress in getting the Abaco water system back online. By the time of this report, only one out of 11 systems is not operational. However, five out of the ten operational systems are running intermittently and rely on generators which were severely damaged by Dorian and are not designed to be running full time. Hence there is a high risk of failure and temporal black-outs of water supply across the island.

Both in Abaco and Grand Bahama there are concerns about potential environmental risks and contamination of water wells associated to debris disposal.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Education

In order to support the reactivation of education activities in reopened schools in Abaco, UNICEF, with partners, has distributed recreational kits to four schools, and eight teachers were trained on the use of these kits. The teachers also received an introduction training on psychosocial support services, with a focus on self-care for the teachers. The use of these kits will benefit at least 80 students currently attending classes in the targeted schools, but this number is expected to increase as children and their families start to return to North and South Abaco. Through ADRA, 22 recreational kits have been distributed to ten schools in Grand Bahama and four more will be distributed to four schools in the coming weeks. The recreational kits benefit more than 3,000 students in these 14 schools.

UNICEF has procured additional critical supplies to support education activities. A shipment of 150 school-in-a-box kits, 80 Early Childhood Development (ECD) kits, 300 first aid kits, 150 math kits and 41 science kits, was brought into the country and handed over to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture. The use of these items can benefit at least 6,000 school-aged children (primary/secondary) and 4,000 children between 0 and 6 years old, in operational schools in the affected islands as well as schools in other islands that have integrated children displaced from Abaco and Grand Bahama. The first batch of supplies is being delivered to schools in Grand Bahama and Abaco. The second batch of supplies will be distributed in December and January upon the re-opening of schools currently closed.

Since mid-September, aiming at increasing local capacities, 56 teachers have been trained on Early Childhood Education in Grand Bahama and Nassau and a total of 79 school counsellors are now better equipped to provide psychosocial support to children affected by the disaster. Through UNICEF's implementing partner, a 'core group' of seven psychologists was established to support counsellors and teachers on the affected islands and will be able to provide more in-depth and specialized mental health support and care to affected teachers and students.

In Grand Bahama, UNICEF supported light rehabilitation works in four schools through implementing partner Global Emergency Relief, Recovery & Reconstruction (GER3), including the Beacon School for Special Needs. As a result of the collaboration, all four schools were able to safely reopen benefitting around 2,000 children. In addition, UNICEF and GER3 have established a new agreement for cleaning, debris clearance and partial restoration in seven prioritized public schools in Grand Bahama, allowing at least 5,000 students to return to a safer educational environment. Moreover, in a joint UNICEF-UNDP effort, debris removal activities will be extended to Abaco in the coming weeks.

UNICEF supported the logistics and implementation of an inter-agency school assessment visiting all affected schools in Abaco. The assessment team was comprised of representatives of UNICEF, MoE, UNDP, ADRA and Samaritan's Purse and aimed at planning the next phase of education support to hurricane-affected schools, including the debris clearance and rehabilitation of the worst affected schools that remain closed.

As sector co-leader, UNICEF is coordinating and providing technical support to USAID in the formulation of a holistic education assessment to be conducted between December and January. The assessment will include both the soft and hard education components across all affected islands, inclusive of the islands absorbing children from Abaco and Grand Bahama, and it will help to inform future interventions of education authorities and partners.

WASH

Considering the large number of partners providing WASH services in Nassau, Abaco and Grand Bahama, UNICEF has prioritized the provision of full support to authorities, co-leading the WASH sector working groups at both national and local levels. Since October, UNICEF has two WASH Coordination Specialists in the field to support sectoral coordination, in collaboration with the WSC and the Grand Bahama Port Authority, main counterparts of the national WASH Group - under the Emergency Support Function (ESF) 3 - Public works and transport. The WASH Coordination Specialists co-lead coordination efforts in Abaco, Grand Bahama and New Providence (national level). With partners' support, UNICEF is mapping the distribution of drinking water and hygiene kits over time to better appraise the response

and gaps. In addition, UNICEF is working with the Department of Environmental Health, the Ministry of Health as well as humanitarian agencies in improving water quality monitoring and strategic water trucking.

With UNICEF support, the national WASH group - in collaboration with the Department of Social Services - visited the Kendal G.L. Isaacs Gymnasium and the Bahamas Academy shelters in Nassau to assess the general WASH situation. The assessment was a joint coordination effort between the Department of Social Services, WSC, NEMA, IFRC and UNICEF. The team noted the tremendous efforts that have been made to create a clean and dignified living environment for the evacuees. As a result of the assessment, the national WASH sector advised the Department of Social Services to accept the support of the national WASH group through the direct intervention of the IFRC in activities to ensure the sustainability of a safe and clean environment for families living in these shelters, in line with Sphere standards. UNICEF, as group co-leader, will continue promoting the engagement of the Ministry of Health and the shelter managers on WASH coordination instances.

Currently in Grand Bahama, the WASH group is working with the Port Authority to identify vulnerable remote communities in need of potable water, in order to increase the number of water distribution points. The local WASH group is planning to carry out a post-distribution monitoring exercise for the water trucking activities, to inform actors on the potential areas of improvement and ensure quality of the water distributed to end-users. In addition, the national WASH group is gathering Grand Bahama post-disaster data from relevant authorities, in order to inform more accurate planning and targeting.

Coordination efforts in Abaco have led to structured and standardized water trucking, minimizing the number of actors producing and trucking, and standardizing the quality testing and reporting. Through this optimization, the Abaco WASH sector is better prepared for the upcoming increase in the Abaco population.

UNICEF has recently signed an agreement with implementing partner Water Mission to build back better the water supply system of Marsh Harbour city on Abaco island, through solarization of the wellfield and pumping station. Once completed - during the first quarter of 2020, the restored system will benefit over 12,000 people monthly and around 1,220 children who will be provided access to safe water for drinking and personal hygiene in schools, temporary learning spaces and other child-friendly spaces.

Child Protection

By the first week of October, at least 1,200 children in need of care and protection services had been documented and referred to social services by the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development (MSSUD), working in close collaboration with UNICEF.

Aiming at building capacities to provide psychosocial support services in emergencies (including on Return to Happiness, Child Friendly Spaces activities) at national and local level, UNICEF continues supporting training activities to equip social workers and volunteers from the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (MYSC) and community and field-based organizations. Since mid-September, 60 volunteers (including 17 staff from the MYSC) have been trained in Nassau and Grand Bahama.

UNICEF distributed recreational materials to the MSSUD (25 kits) and to the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (15 kits). These materials will benefit 2,000 children in the coming weeks. The Department of Culture (under the MYSC) received additional UNICEF-supported supplies which will benefit at least 2,000 children to be reached with psychosocial support and recreational activities in Child Friendly Community Spaces in New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco.

UNICEF has established a new agreement to scale up community-based mental health and psychosocial support services, targeting over 2,000 children directly affected by the consequences of Dorian Hurricane in Nassau, Grand Bahama and Abaco. This agreement also includes an education component to train school counsellors, teachers and school psychologists on school-based psychosocial support. Under this agreement, a total of ten child-friendly spaces (CFSs) will be established, including: four in Grand Bahama (two already functioning); two in Nassau (one already functioning), and four in Abaco (to be opened in the coming weeks). A total of 45 children are currently enrolled in the CFSs.

In early November, UNICEF visited the Kendal G.L. Isaacs Gymnasium shelter (Nassau) finding key needed actions to improve the situation of children, including training of the Shelter Management team on Child Protection, dissemination of key messages on child protection risks, psychosocial support for caregivers, promotion of early stimulation activities for children under 5, and installation of additional lighting on the ground and outside washrooms. In view of these needs, UNICEF will provide life-saving messages in English to be translated for non-English speakers among the sheltered population, and it will support coordination with authorities and other partners to cover the remaining gaps.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is providing overall leadership of the response and has established a total of 14 Emergency Support Functions (ESF), stationed in the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) at the NEMA headquarters in Nassau. This structure has been replicated in Grand Bahama and Abaco. A new Ministry of

Disaster Preparedness, Management and Reconstruction was established by the Government of the Bahamas, and a Disaster Reconstruction Authority Bill is currently under discussion to address issues related to reconstruction, distribution of funds, and coordination with national and international organizations, among others.

UN and NGOs coordination fora have been established and sectoral coordination is organized by the Government with support from UN agencies. With the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development, UNICEF co-chairs the national Child Protection Sub-Working Group, under the ESF 6 (Mass care and shelter service). This model will be replicated in Abaco and Grand Bahama. The Education Working Group has been established at national and sub-national levels, co-led by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF, the groups have been meeting regularly in New Providence, Abaco and Grand Bahama. UNICEF supports the coordination of the WASH groups at national level in New Providence, and at sub-national level in Grand Bahama and Abaco islands. UNICEF is also part of the Gender-based Violence (GBV) coordination sub-working group and, in collaboration with UNFPA, has supported the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development in developing an interagency GBV referral pathway.¹²

Through the Food Security and Livelihoods coordination group (ESF 11), UNICEF has also provided remote support to the Ministry of Health (Department of Nutrition) for the design of a post-disaster nutritional assessment. UNICEF has shared materials and technical guidelines including on general donations and distribution of food. It has also provided tools for assessing needs and risks in shelters and at household level, as well as guidance on how to interpret data collected and recommendations.

UNICEF has set up a response plan in support of the Government of the Bahamas' line ministries and entities, with the following main components:

- **Child protection:** Supporting the acceleration of social services and delivery of child protection interventions; provision of community-based psychosocial support services for affected vulnerable and at-risk children; and reinforcing capacity of authorities for sectoral coordination. UNICEF will advocate to ensure that all affected children have access to services, including access to learning and protection services.
- **Education:** Contributing to strengthen the capacity of the national education system for school-based psychosocial support, and supporting rehabilitation works in schools in Abaco and Grand Bahama, to ensure the resumption of education in safe education environments.
- **WASH:** Supporting sector coordination at national and sub-national level, to ensure the effective and efficient use of the resources deployed by government, private and humanitarian actors. In addition, UNICEF supports build back better efforts for ensuring water provision while building resilience for future responses, with a climate-resilient approach (solarization of Marsh Harbour water well field).

In addition, UNICEF will provide critical emergency supplies to fill the gaps of implementing partners and government counterparts.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

The dedicated landing page¹³ on the global website continues to be updated with the latest published multimedia resources. A communication field mission is planned in December to collect new stories and produce multimedia products. New videos and pictures with UNICEF-supported response will be disseminated in social media channels at global, regional and national levels, including through UNICEF National Committees.

Next SitRep: 16 December 2019

UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office: <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en>

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¹² Gender-Based Violence Working Group - Bahamas Emergency Response, 'Referral Pathway for Survivors of Gender-Based Violence', 8 October 2019, <<http://bit.ly/33nCGbk>>

¹³ <<https://www.unicef.org/stories/hurricane-dorian-leaves-behind-massive-destruction-bahamas>>

Annex A

Funding Status*

Sector	Requirements (US\$)	Funds available (US\$)
Education	1,621,320	1,621,320
WASH	1,260,163	1,260,163
Child Protection**	630,580	630,580
Total	3,512,063	3,512,063

* Funding requirements as of 22 November 2019.

** Including mental health (PSS).