



Hurricane Dorian Bahamas Humanitarian Situation Report No.2



SITUATION IN NUMBERS

13 September 2019

15,000

Estimated No. of people in need (Source: CDEMA Situation Report No. 11, 10 Sept. 2019).

10,000

Estimated No. of displaced children that need access to safe and protective learning opportunities.

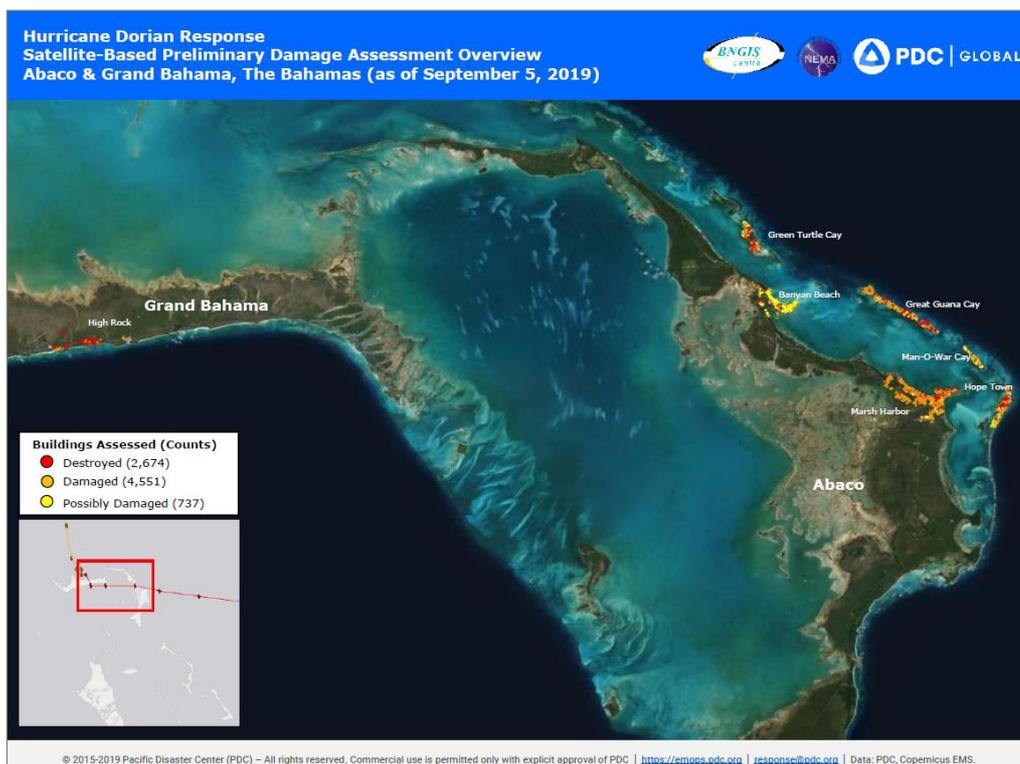
1,200

Estimated No. of children in shelters managed by the government

**UNICEF current estimated needs:
US\$ 3.8 million**

Highlights

- Almost two weeks after Category-5 Hurricane Dorian ravaged Abaco and Grand Bahama islands, the overall assessment of the situation is evolving rapidly. Figures point that around 14,000 people have been displaced.
- Destruction of housing and infrastructure has been massive, particularly in parts of Abaco. A Preliminary Damage Assessment estimates that at least 2,674 buildings have been destroyed and 4,557 are damaged. Rehabilitation and reconstruction can take years, leaving thousands of children without a permanent home.
- UNICEF has deployed ten staff in Bahamas including WASH, Education, Child Protection, Emergency Coordination and Communication experts, additional support staff is being deployed in the coming days.
- With UNICEF's support, the Government launched the school registrations process which will culminate in the enrolment of up to 10,000 students. Starting in Nassau, the school registration process will be gradually rolled out in other areas of the country in the coming weeks.
- Approximately 6,000 children will benefit from the donation of 120 recreation kits transported by the Government of Jamaica.
- Based on finding of field assessments and in line with coordination agreements, UNICEF is developing a response plan for 120 days in support of the Government's 120-day response and relief plan.



Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Almost two weeks after Category-5 Hurricane Dorian ravaged Abaco and Grand Bahama islands, the overall situation is evolving rapidly. While obtaining reliable data is still challenging, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) estimates that at least 15,000 people would be in need of assistance.¹ The level of vulnerability varies between different socio-economic/ethnic groups, the effects of the disaster may impact particularly the migrant community and the Bahamian fishing communities. The official death toll as of 10 September rose to at least 50 and the number of missing persons stands at 1,300.² Evacuations from Abaco to the New Providence -led by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)- are in progress. It has been estimated that over 14,000 people have been displaced due to the disaster, among them 2,130 people were staying in 13 shelters as of 12 September.³

The Government of the Bahamas and the private sector stepped up search and recovery of remains, debris removal, restoration of water systems, power supplies, telecommunications. Major efforts are being made by authorities to ensure the early return of children to school and to keep all health facilities functional, medical supplies and equipment were provided by private sector and bilateral donations and mental health experts were deployed to Abaco and Grand Bahama.

The destruction of housing and infrastructure has been massive, particularly in parts of Abaco. A satellite-based Preliminary Damage Assessment estimates that of a total of 7,962 buildings assessed in Abaco and Grand Bahamas, at least 2,674 have been destroyed (34 per cent) and 4,557 are damaged (57 per cent).⁴ The rehabilitation and reconstruction works could take years to restore normality in the affected islands, heavily impacting the wellbeing of thousands of children, left without a permanent housing solution. Meanwhile, integration of displaced children and families will be a great challenge for Bahamian authorities.

Affected Population (Estimates calculated based on figures by CDEMA as of 10 September 2019, age group breakdown based on UNDESA population prospects for Bahamas). ⁵			
	Male	Female	Total
Total Population in need	7,290	7,710	15,000
Children (0-17)	2,019	1,966	3,985
Children (0-4)	532	501	1,033
Children (0-1)	226	216	442

Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

The Government response is being led by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) through the Emergency Operations Center. At the national level the response is being organized across 14 Emergency Support Functions (ESF) identified as critical, similar arrangements are being set up in Abaco and Grand Bahama. National authorities work in close partnership with CDEMA and preparations are ongoing to facilitate the deployment of experts from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to support Initial Damage and Human Needs Assessments (IDHNA).

As of 12 September, at least 42 international organizations have deployed staff to support the authorities' response in Bahamas including UN agencies, international NGOs, Red Cross Movement and bilateral agencies.⁶ With the leadership of OCHA and the UN Resident Coordinator a.i.,⁷ coordination mechanisms with authorities are being established around the ESFs, and planning parameters and priorities are being collectively agreed. UNICEF is leading water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector together with PAHO. UNICEF has also been engaging with partners and is planning to hold a coordination meeting next week.

¹ CDEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian Situation Report No. 11, as of 8:00 PM on September 10, 2019', 10 September 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2keod9V>>.

² CNN, '1,300 people are listed as missing nearly 2 weeks after Hurricane Dorian hit the Bahamas', 12 September 2019, <<https://cnn.it/2ke92NZ>>, accessed 12 September 2019.

³ Two shelters in Grand Bahama with 71 people; nine shelters in New Providence with 2059 persons)

⁴ BNGIS Centre, NEMA, PDC Global; 'Map book: Satellite-based preliminary damage assessment. Abaco & Grand Bahama (as of September 5, 2019), 9 September 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2kFhHJv>>, accessed 10 September 2019.

⁵ Estimates based on preliminary raw information, subject to changes depending on the availability of quality data.

⁶ CDEMA - OCHA, 'BAHAMAS Hurricane Dorian: Operational Presence & Assessment Team Deployments', 12 September 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2mcmYcP>>, accessed 12 September 2019.

⁷ UNICEF Representative in Jamaica is currently acting as Resident Coordinator a.i. for Jamaica whose area of responsibility includes the Bahamas.

Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF has currently ten staff deployed in Bahamas, supporting assessments, sectoral coordination and response. The team is composed of WASH, Education, Child Protection, Emergency Coordination and Communication experts, while additional support staff is being deployed in the coming days. Moreover, UNICEF has a dedicated team providing remote support from its Regional Office in Panama as well as its Headquarters in New York.

Based on findings of field assessments, and according to coordination agreements with governmental and international partners, UNICEF is developing a response plan for 120 days in support of the Government's 120-day response and relief plan. UNICEF's main focus is placed on addressing the needs of vulnerable children related to Child Protection, Education, WASH and malnutrition prevention.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

WASH

Hurricane Dorian caused significant damage to the water distribution systems on the islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama, with the aquifers being contaminated and pumping stations damaged. Families currently have limited access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities and solid waste management. The Water & Sewerage Corporations (WSC) are currently assessing the extent of the damage of the extraction and distribution networks and testing water quality in the wells with the objective of restoring service but face challenges in accessing infrastructure due to the blocking of roads. With the limited amount of water available, children and their families have limited access to sanitation and bathing facilities posing significant risk to health.

UNICEF has two WASH officers based in Nassau providing humanitarian assistance and WASH sector coordination support to NEMA through the main government partner, the Bahamas Water and Sewerage Corporation (WSC). Based on the needs assessments for Abaco and Grand Bahamas, the WASH sector coordination group has provided Information Management support for the NGOs that have been deploying and implementing equipment for safe drinking water production, intermediate storage and distribution to beneficiaries to help share locations of operations and identify gaps in services.

Full damage assessments and accurate figures of persons in need on both Abaco and Grand Bahamas are not yet available to guide accurate planning for response and targeting of population in need. While deployments of safe drinking water production equipment have been rapid through NGOs, overall coordination for this has been difficult to monitor with identified gaps emerging for communities especially in eastern Grand Bahamas. Distribution of safe water from the production points is constrained due to limited transportation options to in-need communities by road. Priority to date has been focused on safe drinking water provision, with limited attention placed on solid waste management.

UNICEF has provided 405,000 water purification tablets, six 5,000-litre collapsible storage tanks and 1,000 ten-litre family water containers, which will be utilized through the operations of the NGO Mercy Corp in Freeport, Grand Bahama starting on 12 September. Other partners, such as Water Mission, Samaritans Purse, IFRC, World Hope International, and IsraAID have teams on the ground in both Abaco and Grand Bahama providing drinking water and distributing family hygiene kits.

To support early recovery efforts, through a donation by the Swiss Development Corporation, UNICEF is supporting the WSC with a Water Distribution Module, which will contribute to enhance the production and distribution of safe drinking water in Marsh Harbour in Abaco, with capacity to serve approximately 5,000 people daily. This support includes the deployment of five technical personnel to support the installation of the equipment.

Education

An immediate education concern is to ensure some 10,000 displaced girls and boys evacuated from the affected islands have access to safe and protective learning opportunities. The Ministry of Education's focus is to ensure evacuated children are registered and that the education staff's technical capacity is strengthened to provide school-based psychosocial support services to all children in schools.

A main constraint is the lack of clear figures on the affected population in general and the scope of damages. More is known on the extent of destruction of school infrastructure, equipment and invaluable school records in Grand Bahama and Abaco, which has caused a devastating impact in the lives and futures of girls and boys. Urgent action is required to undertake a systematic and phased approach in the assessment and reconstruction of schools, provision of much needed equipment and furniture, including teaching and learning materials.

UNICEF is providing technical support to the inter-Ministerial effort, under the leadership of the Ministry of Education, in facilitating school registration of evacuated children until mid-October and establishing a secure central data management system to be used by all relevant government partners. The children who register for schooling will also be able to access multiple services from other Ministries during this process, including medical screening required for school enrolment, uniform and lunch assistance, referrals for counselling services and enrolment in social, sporting and extra-curricular activities.

With the support of UNICEF, on 12 September, the Government launched the registration process to enrol back in school up to 10,000 students (4-19 years old), starting at the Thomas A. Robinson National Stadium in Nassau to be gradually rolled out in other areas of the country in the coming weeks.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF is kick-starting a series of training of trainers to equip over 250 school counsellors and teachers across the country with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide psychosocial support (PSS) and recreational activities to evacuee students and children in host communities. This training is the first phase, targeting New Providence island, and will extend to other islands such as Grand Bahama, Andros and Eleuthera.

Child Protection

Hurricane Dorian has put further strain on the existing fragile situation and community-based and protection support systems of some 10,000 girls and boys. These children are in urgent need of support to address key protection concerns that include family separation, hazardous child labour, psychological distress and other forms of violence.

The Ministry of Social Services and Social Development, in collaboration with other government entities and child protection humanitarian actors, are currently addressing three key challenges in implementing effective responses: identifying and reaching displaced children in host settings, addressing the urgent child protection concerns of children in affected households that have not moved from Abaco and Grand Bahama, and supporting children and their families/caregivers in local integration.

In support of the Ministry of Social Services efforts to ameliorate the situation of forcibly displaced children and relocated to New Providence district, UNICEF is supporting the documentation and provision of child protection services to 1,200 children that are in shelters managed by the government. This undertaking is part of the efforts to strengthen the national case management capacities.

Approximately 6,000 children will benefit from the donation of 120 recreation kits transported by the Government of Jamaica. Since 12 September, UNICEF is supporting training for trainers on PSS, including on the use of the donated kits.

Considering the massive relocation of persons, including children, from Hurricane-impacted areas (Abaco and Grand Bahama) to New Providence, social services and protection systems, are under additional pressure, including its workforce, to adequately address all the emerging child protection needs.

Nutrition

The sector priority is to support authorities in preventing malnutrition among vulnerable groups affected, in particular infants, young children and pregnant and lactating women.

UNICEF has advocated with authorities and partners for the provision of appropriate and prompt support for the feeding and care of infants and young children and their caregivers, including the prevention of donations and untargeted distributions of infant formula, as to their use carries additional risks in this emergency environment due to infectious disease environment, poor access to supplies, lack of fuel, lack of equipment, lack of clean water, poor access to healthcare and feeding support.

Media and External Communication

A press release highlighting the extent of the devastation and UNICEF's first relief shipment was issued on 7 September, featuring also the key collaboration of IFRC,⁸ a second note was released on 12 September with the launch of UNICEF's support to education authorities.⁹ Regional Chief of Communications, Regional Communication Specialist and a multimedia team were deployed to Nassau. Two holding statements were launched and disseminated globally in the first days, as well as three videos, a blogspot and several pictures from Abaco and Nassau. All materials were disseminated through social media channels. UNICEF team on the ground attended live interviews with international media.

⁸ UNICEF, 'Humanitarian plane with 1.5 tons of UNICEF supplies lands in hurricane-hit Bahamas', 7 September 2019, <<https://uni.cf/2kFq3Rn>>, accessed 9 September 2019.

⁹ UNICEF, 'Hurricane Dorian: Bahamas Government and UNICEF to bring 10,000 displaced children back to school', 12 September 2019, <<https://uni.cf/2kz6w5l>>, accessed 12 September 2019.

Funding

Based on the latest assessments, UNICEF current estimated needs are US\$ 3.8 million to respond to the needs of children and their families following Hurricane Dorian, with focus on Child Protection, Education and WASH. In order to kick-start the response, UNICEF has activated its Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) loan mechanism and advanced US\$ 500,000 of internal resources.

Appeal Sector	Current estimated requirements (US\$)
WASH	1,628,000
Child Protection	1,305,000
Education	895,000
Total	3,828,000

Next SitRep: 18/09/2019

Who to contact for further information:

Marie France Bourgeois
Regional Emergency Adviser a.i.
Latin America and the Caribbean
Regional Office
mfbourgeois@unicef.org
Tel: +507 63634992

Laurent Duvillier
Regional Chief of Communication
Latin America and the Caribbean
Regional Office
lduvillier@unicef.org
Tel: +507 61699886

Naqibullah Safi
Senior Emergency Specialist
(deployed in Bahamas)
nsafi@unicef.org
Tel: +1 9172932805