



Hurricane Dorian Bahamas Humanitarian Situation Report No.1



SITUATION IN NUMBERS

Highlights

- On 1 September 2019, Category-5 Hurricane Dorian hit Abaco and Grand Bahama islands, leaving behind a path of destruction unprecedented in this Caribbean country. As of 5 September, the death toll had reached 30 but the number of casualties could be significantly higher as search and rescue operations continue.
- Given the extremely challenging logistics, Rapid Needs Assessment Teams have only been able to conduct aerial reconnaissance, but ground assessments are still pending to grasp the extend of the disaster and the situation of the population. UNICEF was able to reach Abaco island on 6 September to witness the extend of the destruction.
- Authorities estimate that at least 68,000 people have been exposed to the disaster in Grand Bahama and Abaco, among them around 18,000 are children and adolescents.
- Considering the extensive damages and access constraints, safe water, food, health care, non-formal education activities and psychosocial support for children and adolescents are the envisaged priority needs.
- On 5 September, UNICEF deployed staff to Bahamas including sector experts. The emergency team is expecting to be able to conduct assessments on 7 September to inform UNICEF's humanitarian strategy and response plan.
- In collaboration with IFRC, a first shipment of UNICEF WASH supplies is expected to arrive on 8 September in Nassau, with key items including water purification tabs to benefit approximately 9,500 people for 2 weeks.

6 September 2019

68,592

No. of people exposed to Hurricane Dorian in Abaco and Grand Bahama islands (Source: CDEMA Situation Report No. 6, 5 Sept).

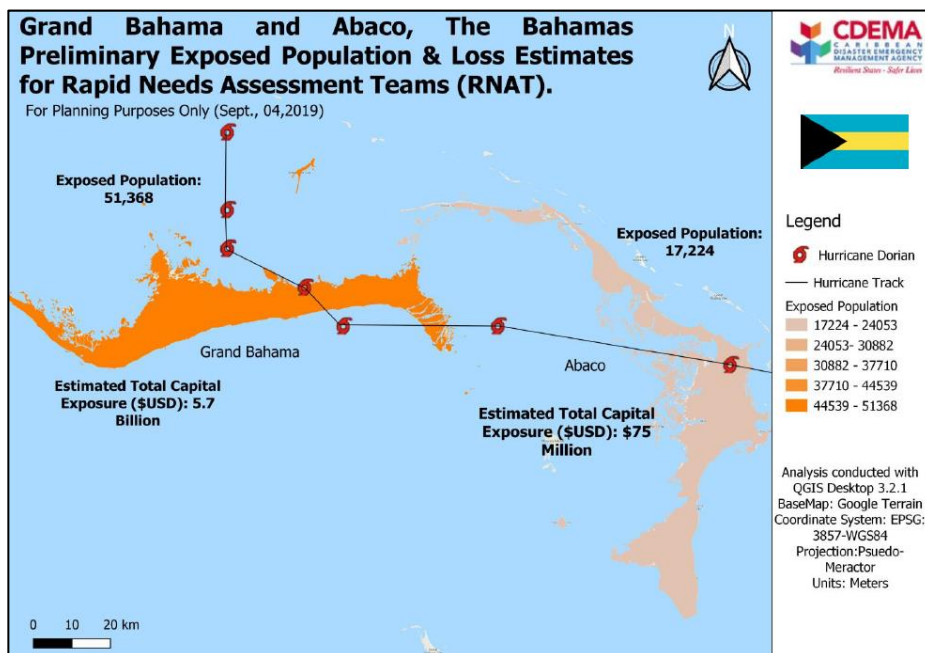
18,177

No. of children and adolescents under 18 exposed to Hurricane Dorian in Abaco and Grand Bahama islands (Source: Estimated by UNICEF, based on CDEMA Situation Report No. 6, 5 Sept).

Approx. 3,000

No. of children of primary and secondary school-age in Abaco who could require support.

**UNICEF Preliminary
Funding Needs:
US\$ 4 million**



Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Dorian, the first major hurricane of the 2019 Atlantic hurricane season, intensified speedily reaching Category 5 on 1 September while hitting first Elbow Cay in the Abaco Islands of the Bahamas with 185 mph winds. On the same day the hurricane made landfall in Grand Bahama, the northernmost of the islands of the Bahamas. The storm remained stationed over Abaco and Grand Bahama islands until 3 September leaving behind a path of destruction unprecedented in this Caribbean country. As of 5 September, the death toll had reached 30 in Abaco and Grand Bahama islands¹ but the number of casualties could be significantly higher as search and rescue operations continue.

A Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) comprised of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and humanitarian partners conducted aerial reconnaissance to assess the scope of the damages in both Abaco and Grand Bahama, finding severe destruction of housing and infrastructure. In Grand Bahama, the airport runway and the seaport appear to be in good condition, but the island is out of power and approximately 90 per cent of buildings are estimated to be severely affected. In Great Abaco, the Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) reported that the international airport runway is partially submerged, and the control tower has water damage. Moreover, significant damages were observed in housing in the Central and Northern end of the island, roads are blocked due to debris, and there is shortage of drinking water.² By the time of this report, there are no official estimates of the number of people displaced, but according to media reports, affected families have taken shelter in clinics and government buildings, including at least 2,000 people in Abaco.³

Although ground assessments in the coming hours will be critical to grasp the magnitude of damages and humanitarian needs, considering the extensive damage on infrastructure, telecommunications and electricity systems, and the physical access constraints, it is expected that population remaining in the affected islands - particularly children and pregnant women - are in urgent need of assistance including access to safe water, food, health care, non-formal education activities and psychosocial support for children and adolescents. Based on pre-emergency data, the Government of the Bahamas issued an Immediate Assistance Supplies List, including hygiene kits and critical items for water supply, storage and purification, non-food items for shelter establishment, first aid items and equipment for debris removal, among other.

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) estimates that at least 68,000 people have been exposed to the disaster in Grand Bahama and Abaco, at least 18,000 of them are children. The number of people in need, the most vulnerable among the affected, is yet to be determined.

Preliminary Exposed Population (Estimates calculated based on initial figures by CDEMA as of 4 September 2019, age group breakdown based on UNDESA population prospects for Bahamas).			
	Grand Bahama	Abaco	Total
Total Population exposed	51,368	17,224	68,592
Children (0-17)	13,613	4,564	18,177
Children (0-4)	3,544	1,188	4,733
Children (0-1)	1,490	499	1,989

Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

The Government response is being led by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), in close partnership with CDEMA, currently focused on search and rescue, and recovery.

At least 15 international organizations have deployed staff to support the authorities' response in Bahamas including UN agencies, international NGOs and bilateral agencies as of 5 September.⁴ With the leadership of OCHA and the UN Resident Coordinator a.i.,⁵ coordination mechanisms with national authorities are being established. UNICEF is leading water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector together with PAHO and is ready to assume sectoral leadership responsibilities in Education, Nutrition and Child Protection -Area of Responsibility, if sectors are activated.

During his visit on 4 September, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Mark Lowcock, announced that the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) would provide an immediate US\$1 million to kick-start relief efforts.

¹ According to media statements by the Bahamian health minister. AP News, 'Hurricane death toll in Bahamas at 30 as aid begins to land', 5 September 2019, <<https://apnews.com/db1ca34069140d982a6cffe98c8c26f>>, accessed 6 September 2019.

² CDEMA, 'Hurricane Dorian Situation Report No. 6, as of 6:00 PM on September 5, 2019', 5 September 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2kyiBrb>>, accessed 6 September 2019.

³ The New York Times, 'Death Toll Rises to 30 in Bahamas, as Stories of Survival Emerge', 5 September 2019, <<https://nyti.ms/2kyMkQL>>, accessed 6 September 2019.

⁴ CDEMA - OCHA, 'BAHAMAS Hurricane Dorian: Operational Presence & Assessment Team Deployments, As of 05 September 2019', 5 September 2019, <<http://bit.ly/2m30UAC>>, accessed 6 September 2019.

⁵ UNICEF Representative in Jamaica is currently acting as Resident Coordinator a.i. for Jamaica whose area of responsibility includes the Bahamas.

Humanitarian Strategy

Since 5 September, UNICEF has deployed staff in the Bahamas to assess the needs of the most vulnerable children and families. The first responder team is composed of WASH, Child Protection, Emergency Coordination and Communications experts. Despite the extremely challenging logistic situation on the ground, UNICEF was able to reach Abaco island to witness the extent of the destruction. Devastating damage is widespread, but Mash Harbour town is extremely affected. Main buildings are collapsed, entire neighbourhoods are flattened, shipping containers and boats lay inland. The emergency team is expecting to be able to conduct assessments on 7 September. Field missions will inform UNICEF's humanitarian strategy and response plan. In view of the findings, additional staff will be deployed. Moreover, UNICEF has a dedicated team providing remote support from its Regional Office in Panama as well as its Headquarters in New York.

UNICEF emergency experts currently based in Nassau have met authorities to identify key sectors of collaboration. Preliminary needs for support have been flagged for WASH items, materials for child-friendly spaces and non-formal education activities as well as psychosocial support.

In order to kick-start the response, UNICEF has activated its Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) mechanisms and advanced US\$ 500,000. Furthermore, UNICEF has teamed up with the IFRC to streamline logistics and a shipment of water and sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies will land in Nassau on 8 September. UNICEF also plans to increasingly work with the WFP.

To respond to the immediate urgent needs of the most vulnerable children among the affected population, and to support rehabilitation of schools and water systems, UNICEF preliminary funding requirement stands at US\$4 million.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

WASH

Aerial reconnaissance and preliminary estimations indicate that due to floodwaters, water and sanitation systems may have been compromised in Abaco and areas of Grand Bahama. Contamination and lack of safe water is expected, exposing population to waterborne diseases and related risks.

In response to the potential scenarios, UNICEF has deployed WASH experts to join assessments in the affected area as soon as conditions are favourable. A first shipment of WASH supplies is arriving on 8 September in Nassau, including water tanks that can benefit up to 1,920 people daily, purification tabs and water containers for 500 families.

UNICEF-supported WASH supplies being shipped to Nassau

Description	Quantities	Estimated No. of beneficiaries
Water tanks, collapsible, 5,000L	6	To serve approx. 1,920 people per day (30L/day).
Water purification tabs	8,100	To serve approx. 9,500 people (30L/day) for 2 weeks.
Chlorine/pH, Pool Tester Kit for 250 test	10	
Water containers, 10L, collapsible	1,000	To serve approx. 500 families (2 jerrycans/family)

Education / Protection

UNICEF is engaging with the Ministry of Education to assess the main needs in the sector. It is estimated that among Abaco's total population, there are 3,000 children of primary and secondary school-age who could require support. The establishment of child-friendly spaces with non-formal education activities has been prioritized to ensure that children can recover from the shock of the disaster. UNICEF Jamaica in partnership with the government has made available 200 recreation kits that could be released if needed. In addition, UNICEF will plan for potential distribution of kits for psychosocial support in shelters.

Nutrition

UNICEF is currently providing remote support from the Regional Office, engaging with national authorities to share guidelines and key information material on Infant Feeding in Emergencies. This is key during the early stages of the response, to ensure appropriate and prompt support for the feeding and care of infants and young children and their caregivers.

Next SitRep: 09/09/2019

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