HIGHLIGHTS

- Abaco aerial surveillance shows vast devastation to the island’s infrastructure. Communications are being restored but there is still no electricity on the island.
- WASH and food have been identified as critical needs on the islands affected.
- Over 1,200 people are reported in various shelters in Great Abaco and Grand Bahama and an additional 800 are sheltering at Marsh Harbour Clinic.
- The Ministry of Health reports that flooding in Rand Memorial Hospital is contaminated with sewage.
- Due to the floodwaters and potential sewage contamination, the risk of diarrheal and waterborne diseases remains high. Additionally, other water borne infections such as leptospirosis could be a concern in the near future.

Aerial view of Abaco taken September 3, 2019

AFFFECTED

- 73,000 people
- 7 deaths
- 3 Islands (Abaco, Grand Bahama & New Providence)

DAMAGED

- 13,000 homes
- 4 clinics (non-operational)

SHELTERS

- > 2,000 people

1. CDEMA Situation Report #5 (Sept 3, 2019)
2. IFRC emergency appeal (Sept 3, 2019)
SITUATION OVERVIEW

Hurricane Dorian, a Category 5 hurricane, made landfall at Elboy Cay, Abaco at 12:40 EST September 1st and landfall in mainland Abaco at 14:00 EST. The hurricane had devastating effects, especially on the islands of Grand Bahama and Abaco, as they had prolonged exposure to extreme hurricane force winds, storm surges, flooding and intense rainfall. Due to floodwaters and potential contamination with sewage and lack of safe water, the risk remains high of diarrheal and waterborne diseases. While the initial death count is at 7, it is expected to rise as more areas become accessible and search and rescue operations begin.

BAHAMAS

Abaco island:
- The all-clear was given early yesterday. Search and rescue operations began with the assistance of the US military rescuing 90 individuals and providing additional 4 helicopters for operations.
- Aerial surveillance shows vast devastation of island infrastructure. Phone services have been partially re-established but there is still no electricity.
- Marsh Harbour airport is reportedly completely flooded. The roads are still partially flooded and covered with debris but seem accessible. Sandy Point airport still has no internet and no communication capacity but is reported clear.
- The Marsh Harbour Clinic is operational but still without communication, water, and the generator is able to sustain electric power for a week. Over 800 people have sought shelter in the clinic with reports of individuals becoming unruly. In addition to safe water, sanitation, hygiene, and food remain critical issues at this hospital.
- There is no information yet available on damages of other clinics on the island other than Sandy Point Clinic which has no power, no generator and no water.
- There are no updates on the status of ports in Abaco.

Grand Bahama:
- As per an aerial surveillance flight, flood waters appear to be receding with most roads passable on the island. Aerial surveillance also shows some beach homes were destroyed and some damage to roofs. Freeport airport is non-operational due to severe flooding.
- There is no available information about fatalities in Grand Bahama. There are concerns about the future management of corpses, and are considering using trailer containers for temporary storage.
- WASH
  - Water well fields show some flooding with Bahamian authorities already cleaning trenches and expecting wells to be operational within 1-2 weeks
- Health Services
  - The Ministry of Health has shared a list of essential equipment and supplies required for the hospitals pending a formal assessment. Supplies available in the country are expected to last 2 months.
  - Rand Memorial Hospital is flooded with reported sewage contamination. A significant proportion of hospital supplies damaged beyond repair or unusable. There is no electricity and the hospital’s generator and ambulances are non-functional. Water, sanitation and food are critical issues. Decisions are being made about possible evacuation of ICU, dialysis and other patients to New Providence Princess Margaret Hospital.
  - The Eight Mile Rock Clinic has collapsed. The initial plan is to contact the private sector and possibly request the British or Dutch hospital vessel that is nearby to support health services.
- Telecommunications have been partially re-established

New Providence:
- Pinewood Gardens and South Beach Clinics are flooded and non-operational. Other clinics are partially operational as some health workers are unable to report to work due to poor street conditions. Other health personnel have been relocated to deliver care at the airport and to reinforce services at the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) which is at maximum capacity.

 NEEDS

Preliminary needs include safe water, food, sanitary and hygiene measures, and an expected need for body bags as fatality numbers will increase. More information will be provided after a formal needs assessment is performed on both islands. However it is vital that a comprehensive assessment of the 3 severely impacted health facilities (Marsh Harbour Clinic, Sandy Point Clinic, and Rand Memorial Hospital) is done as soon as possible.

The Ministry of Health has requested PAHO's urgent assistance regarding a hospital solution for Rand Memorial Hospital in Grand Bahama and accepted EMT deployments as soon as possible, as conditions are unattainable and evacuation of patients is needed.
RESPONSE ACTIONS

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has pledged health sector infrastructure and public health support. PAHO is acting quickly with the support of the Ministry of Health to assess needs and damage assessments. An Incident Management System has been established in the country office. The deployment of PAHO’s Disaster Response Team include focus areas of logistics, civil and military coordination, information management, epidemiological surveillance, communications and media, and coordination. PAHO is expected to launch a funding appeal in the coming days.

UN coordination system is on the ground and the Ministry of Health and PAHO are co-leading the Health Cluster.

Ground transportation is expected be a problem during the response as some roads are impassable due to the debris and flooding in Abaco.

The Panama Regional Warehouse remains on standby.

As new information emerges from the field and needs assessments, new possible deployments may be considered by Health Authorities. Additionally, PAHO aids in facilitating negotiation between the Ministry of Health and partners such as the Hospital of Massachusetts for the acquisition of dialysis unit.

Bahamian authorities have stated that search and rescue efforts are the current priorities. Personnel including 2 medical teams and administrative and technical support have been deployed. A rotation system has been established between health care workers to support affected hospitals. Authorities have assisted in the medical evacuation of 70 patients, of which 13 were in critical condition with polytraumas, fractures, head injuries and patients in need of dialysis. Triage, as of September 3rd, was being conducted by the Ministry of Health at the Odyssey Airport Surveillance premises in Lynden airport, Nassau. Patients were then sent Princess Margaret Hospital in New Providence. Non-critical patients will be transported to the Flamingo Gardens Clinic in New Providence.

Flyovers are occurring over Abaco with the Prime Minister and other high-level national emergency officials for an initial overview assessment. It is expected that a team of Ministry of Health and PAHO colleagues will be able to be on the ground for a needs assessment and aerial assessments of sewage loads at Rand Memorial Hospital today.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For more information, please contact:
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