



The Mudd in Marsh Harbour, Abaco—Bahamas, where majority of the Haitian migrant community lived, was destroyed © IOM 2019 (Photo: Vynliz Dailey)

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Between 1-2 September 2019, Hurricane Dorian, a category five storm, devastated the Bahamas. The hardest hit areas were the Abaco Islands and Grand Bahama in the north-western section of the country. Approximately 76,000 people were affected. Electricity is not available and running water is limited. Parts of the affected communities particularly in Abaco, are destroyed and are uninhabitable.

Search and rescue operations continue in the hardest hit communities. The official death toll stands at 50 while over 1,300 people have been reported missing. Those numbers are expected to change as the Coalitions of Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) continue with efforts to access hard to reach areas.

The Government of Bahamas, through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), has taken the lead on coordinating the emergency response from its National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) in Nassau. An emergency support function (ESF) humanitarian coordination structure has been developed and is

comprised of 13 ESF's, each with their own lead government ministries and departments. Through NEMA, the Government has facilitated and encouraged mass evacuation from Abaco to Nassau, Bahamas. Nearly 5,000 people have been evacuated; approximately 1,902 people are presently living in government approved emergency shelters in Nassau, 71 are in shelters in Grand Bahama while 3 persons be being sheltered in Abaco.

The temporary flight restriction is still in effect for Abaco and Grand Bahama. From 13 September 2019, limited commercial traffic has been permitted for aircrafts with a local air operator's certificate at the Grand Bahama International Airport.

In the affected areas there is a public-private sector coordination for the delivery of food, water and supplies for the remaining families. Large scale debris removal has not commenced and is scheduled to being shortly after search and rescue efforts have been completed.

IOM RESPONSE

ASSESSMENTS IN THE MOST AFFECTED COMMUNITIES



Inside *God Say Yes* an informal settlements where a large Haitian Migrant population lived
© IOM 2019 (Photo: Vynliz Dailey)

On 8 September 2019, IOM's Communication Officer went on an assessment mission with representatives from UNICEF, UNDP and Mission of Hope to Abaco. There the team visited the majority of emergency shelters (official and unofficial), communities and building with a population of Haitian migrants – estimated to make up a large portion of the most vulnerable population. The team also conducted a reconnaissance trip over northern Abaco where some communities remain inaccessible by road. A report of findings was presented to UN Agencies and was used as input for the project developments and emergency response.

COLLABORATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHAMAS ON EMERGENCY SHELTER AND MASS CARE



Coordination meetings co-led by IOM and the IFRC take place almost daily with about 35 representatives of government ministries, local NGO's and CBO's as well as UN and other humanitarian partners to support the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development. Together, the partners are tailoring interventions to meet the needs of the displaced population and to fill in the gaps identified by the Government and other agencies relating to shelter coordination and management.

[Read more...](#)

NFI DISTRIBUTION IN ABACO



With support from local and international partners IOM distributed 1,000 tarpaulins delivered to Marsh Harbour Port, Marsh Harbour – Abaco. Distributions were supervised by IOM's Head of Community Stabilization Unit from Washington, stationed in Abaco, who is also leading the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination team in that area. IOM also delivered 5,000 USAID/OFDA supported shelter kits. [Read more here...](#)

THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL VISITS THE BAHAMAS

“The visit from the Secretary General is a strong indication of how invested the international community is with the rehabilitation of the devastated islands of the Bahamas. We're pleased that the SG has recognized the important role that IOM will play in the response” - IOM Team Leader, Jan-Willem

