

# Caribbean (Jamaica) – Hurricane Melissa

## ETC Situation Report #02

Reporting period: 30/10/2025 to 03/11/2025

Hurricane Melissa struck Jamaica on 28 October as a Category 5 storm before impacting Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands. This report outlines ETC support to the national response in Jamaica led by the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), supported by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).

## Highlights

- Following Hurricane Melissa's landfall in late October, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) has confirmed Jamaica as the top response priority due to the scale of impact. The Government is leading relief efforts in the hardest-hit Parishes, where telecoms and power services remain severely disrupted. Mobile network operators continue to report outages across multiple locations, highlighting the need for coordinated support.
- ETC is coordinating with CDEMA and Jamaica's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) to deploy teams and shared communications services in the most impacted areas. Initial connectivity support is focused on Black River and Santa Cruz (St. Elizabeth Parish), Cove Valley (St. Ann Parish), and McGregor Gully (St. Andrew Parish).
- Two ETC personnel are supporting the response: the Regional ETC Coordinator, based in Barbados, and the Global ETC Coordinator, who deployed to Kingston on 02 November to lead telecoms coordination efforts and assist the Government in defining operational priorities.



Hurricane Melissa heavily damaged infrastructure in Black River, St. Elizabeth Parish, Jamaica. Photo/Ricardo Makyn, AFP Images.

## Situation overview

Hurricane Melissa made landfall in Jamaica on 28 October as the strongest Category 5 storm in the country's history, causing widespread devastation. Homes, hospitals, schools, and critical infrastructure were severely damaged, particularly in the western Parishes of St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland. Security concerns, including reports of looting, are complicating relief operations.

The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), supported by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), is leading the national

response. CDEMA has prioritized support to Jamaica, while maintaining limited engagement in Haiti and confirming no further response needs in other affected countries.

Government-led recovery efforts are ongoing. Norman Manley International Airport, reopened on 30 October, remains a key entry point for commercial and humanitarian flights.

On 31 October, CDEMA deployed a 17-member Regional Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) to assist ODPEM with rapid assessments of damage to infrastructure, housing, and essential services. Fieldwork began on 01 November, with findings informing national planning. Humanitarian partners are working to restore access to cut-off areas and address urgent needs.

## Telecommunications overview

As of 03 November, telecommunications and power services in Jamaica remain severely disrupted following Hurricane Melissa. The country's two main Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), Digicel and Flow, continue to report widespread outages. Digicel has restored 46 percent of its mobile sites, 86 percent of fixed networks, and 75 percent of business connections. Nearly 25 percent of its sites are operating on generators as restoration teams prioritize towers and fibre routes. Flow has restored 64 percent of fixed sites, reconnecting 40 percent of customers, primarily in the Corporate Area and eastern Parishes.

National internet connectivity has improved, with [IODA data](#) showing a reduction in overall loss from 55 percent on 30 October to 20 percent. In St. Elizabeth Parish, connectivity loss decreased from 90 percent to 70 percent, and in St. Andrew Parish from 50 percent to 18 percent.

To support emergency access, the Government has released spectrum bands for satellite-based internet services. Flow, working with satellite providers, reports that approximately 70 percent of its customers now have stable connectivity via this backup platform.

## ETC Activities

### Coordination

Two ETC personnel are supporting the Hurricane Melissa response in Jamaica. The Regional ETC Coordinator, based at the WFP Caribbean Multi Country Office (MCO) in Barbados, continues to engage with regional and global partners. The Global ETC Coordinator arrived in Barbados on 31 October and deployed to Kingston on 02 November to lead stakeholder coordination and support government efforts to identify priority locations for telecommunications services.

ETC is participating in daily coordination meetings with the WFP Jamaica Satellite Office, UNOCHA, sector leads, and the Caribbean Development Partner Group (CDPG) Technical Working Groups to align operational priorities. Engagement with NGOs and private sector actors is ongoing to map incoming support and avoid duplication.

ETC is also working closely with CDEMA and ODPEM to coordinate the strategic deployment of teams and shared telecommunications services. Out of Jamaica's 14 Parishes, ODPEM has

identified St. Elizabeth, St. Andrew, St. James, Westmoreland, Hanover, Trelawny, and Manchester as the most impacted. Initial connectivity support is being prioritized for Black River and Santa Cruz (St. Elizabeth Parish), Cove Valley (St. Ann Parish), and McGregor Gully (St. Andrew Parish).

### Response

To support field connectivity, WFP—leading the ETC—has provided a satellite-based internet device to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS) in Santa Cruz, one of the hardest-hit towns in St. Elizabeth Parish, southwestern Jamaica.

As of 03 November, WFP Standby Partners have been mobilized to support the Hurricane Melissa response. Following a request from the WFP Caribbean MCO, ETC partners Ericsson Response and Cisco Crisis Response were placed on standby on 31 October. Each team comprises two specialized personnel and essential equipment to rapidly establish shared telecommunications services. Planned deployments will deliver backhaul connectivity, Wi-Fi distribution systems, and solar power units to priority areas, strengthening emergency communications and supporting the wider humanitarian response.

### Disaster Connectivity Map (DCM)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) activated its [Disaster Connectivity Mapping \(DCM\)](#) tool on 28 October to monitor internet connectivity across affected island nations in near real time. This data is available to CDEMA, RNAT, ODPEM, and deploying partners to support coordinated ICT planning across the region.

## Dashboard

See the [ETC Dashboard](#) for an overview of planned and operational services.

## Funding

The Emergency Relief Coordinator has allocated US\$4 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to enable UN agencies and partners to rapidly scale up humanitarian operations in Jamaica. The funding will support urgent life-saving assistance and strengthen coordination across sectors.

On 01 November, WFP Caribbean MCO and ETC finalized a response budget to support service provision, coordination, and information management for CDEMA and the WFP Caribbean and Jamaica Satellite Office over an initial three-month period. The estimated requirement is US\$780,000, factoring in expected in-kind contributions from partners.

On the same day, WFP Caribbean MCO submitted a request to WFP HQ for a US\$1 million advance from the Immediate Response Account (IRA), with approximately 25 percent of the funds allocated to ETC response activities.

## Challenges

Power outages remain a major challenge across Jamaica, with several critical sites reported destroyed in locations including Portmore near Kingston, Ironshore on the northwestern coast, and Manchioneal on the eastern coast. These disruptions continue to hinder the restoration of essential services.

Additionally, reports of fuel and equipment theft from telecommunications sites have further delayed recovery operations, complicating efforts to re-establish connectivity in affected areas.

## Meetings

The second Global ETC Teleconference on the Hurricane Melissa response was held on **03 November 2025** at 13:00 UTC and the meeting minutes are available [here](#).

## Contacts

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION	CONTACT
Brent Carbno	Global ETC Coordinator	Kingston, Jamaica	<a href="mailto:Brent.carbno@wfp.org">Brent.carbno@wfp.org</a>
Lena Bock	Regional ETC Coordinator	Bridgetown, Barbados	<a href="mailto:Lena.bock@wfp.org">Lena.bock@wfp.org</a>
Mufaro Masuka	Global ETC Information Management Officer	Dubai, U.A.E.	<a href="mailto:Mufaro.masuka@wfp.org">Mufaro.masuka@wfp.org</a>

All information related to the ETC operation can be found on the website:

[www.etcluster.org/emergency/caribbean-hurricane-melissa](http://www.etcluster.org/emergency/caribbean-hurricane-melissa)

For more information or to be added or deleted from the mailing list please contact:

[caribbean.etc@wfp.org](mailto:caribbean.etc@wfp.org)