




Disaster Response

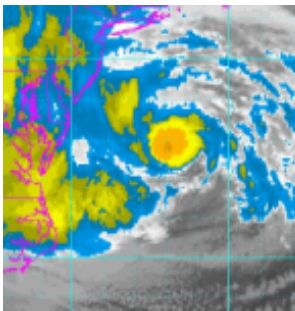
News Update
November 2012

When you restore the mobile network, you rebuild the human network

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Hurricane Sandy: Preparations and Response from Mobile Operators



In the lead-up to Hurricane Sandy making landfall on the East Coast of the United States, GSMA Disaster Response compiled an **overview of efforts** undertaken by mobile operators to support their communications and protect their infrastructure.

Following the storm, customers of US operators faced **mobile outages** after Hurricane Sandy tore through the north-east of the country. Verizon Wireless, AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile customers have all been affected as flooding, power outages and damage to cell towers have seen services fail. AT&T and T-Mobile **agreed to open their networks** in an attempt to provide improved communications access for subscribers, whilst all carriers endeavour to restore their services.

Spotlight on Disaster Risk Reduction

October 13th marked the **International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction**, a day focused on improving resilience at national and community levels to mitigate the impact of natural disasters on the environment, economy, and most importantly, the communities affected by them.

Communities depend on information before, during and after disasters. A keystone of providing this information is establishing coordinated and reliable communications for national and international response agencies. To underline this, we are creating a Coordination Database of key personnel within mobile operators who can liaise with the GSMA, as well as humanitarian and disaster response agencies. [Read more](#)

GSMA Disaster Response on the Move

GSMA Disaster Response travelled to the Philippines in September to visit Smart Communications Inc. and learn about their Disaster Preparedness Programme. Smart has developed a strong community-based approach to their programme design, collaborating with academic institutions, government agencies and non-profit partners. A case study will be published this month, and we hope that Smart's approach and decisions will be instructive for mobile operators addressing their own disaster response activities.

The team also travelled to New Zealand to join a **Vodafone Instant Network** training workshop and simulation held with network engineers. The Vodafone Instant Network is a GSM solution that can be rapidly deployed to emergency zones to support communications between response agencies and the affected community. Insights from this exercise will be shared in an upcoming case study.

Crisis Mapping and Mobile Data

Disaster Response News

1. Despite significant preparation, networks challenged during Hurricane Sandy

2. 5 Ways to Keep Mobile Phones Charged During a Disaster

3. Operators open up networks in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy

4. Internews and ACAPS launch Global Emergency Overview, a mobile app designed to improve humanitarian decision making

GSMA Disaster Response attended the **International Conference of Crisis Mappers**, held in Washington, DC in mid-October. Crisis Mapping is an emerging field that works to harness mobile and web-based apps, crowd sourced data, geospatial information and data visualization to power early warning systems and response activities.

The use of mobile data to map disease outbreak and movements of displaced populations in Haiti was **well-documented**, and we are increasingly seeing operators look to their customer data not only for business intelligence, but as a source of knowledge that could be useful from a social impact and policy perspective.

5. The East-West Institute issues a policy paper on “Priority International Communications: Staying Connected in Times of Crisis.”

6. Asia’s Top Business Leaders Partner on Disaster Risk Reduction

Upcoming Resources

GSMA Disaster Response Vendor Catalogue

The first edition of the **GSMA Disaster Response Vendor Catalogue** has been published. The directory represents a preliminary listing of organisations providing commercial and non-commercial solutions or services that may help the mobile community become better prepared, or better able to respond to natural disasters.

Download the directory

Disaster Response on Mobile and Development Intelligence (MDI)

GSMA Disaster Response will launch its presence on MDI in January 2013. MDI is an open data portal providing mobile industry data and metrics (including coverage maps) alongside development indicators to foster better decision making and research. **Learn more**

Upcoming Events



- 20 November: Join Disaster Response and **CDAC Network** for a webinar on "Mobile and Humanitarian 101", featuring four guest speakers discussing the guiding principles of each community, their limitations, pain-points and opportunities to collaborate better together in disaster preparedness and response. **Register for the webinar**
- 11 December: Disaster Response will host a seminar at the **GSMA LatAm Plenary** in Mexico City. The seminar will focus on operator experiences in coping with recent regional disasters, presenting new vendor solutions, and understanding how to better coordinate with government before and during a crisis. To register your attendance, email: **Kreid@gsm.org**
- 25 February: Plans for **Mobile World Congress 2013** are already underway. Disaster Response will again hold a seminar featuring mobile industry leaders and the broader humanitarian community. Stay tuned for the agenda and list of speakers, and please save the date!



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