West Africa Ebola Crisis

Situation Report #1

Reporting period 22/08/14 to 19/09/14

These Sitreps are distributed every two weeks. The next report will be issued on or around 03/10/14.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has not yet been activated in response to the Ebola emergency in West Africa. Humanitarian partners are, however, working together and sharing information for a coordinated response. As global lead of the ETC, the World Food Programme (WFP) is coordinating inter-agency ICT response efforts.

Highlights

- WFP ICT Response Team deployed to West Africa to meet with humanitarian partners and coordinate inter-agency ICT activities.

Cluster Responsibilities

- *Not applicable. The ETC has not yet been activated in response to the Ebola crisis.*

Achievements

- WFP ICT Response Team deployed to Senegal, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia to meet with humanitarian partners and coordinate inter-agency ICT activities in response to the Ebola Crisis.
- Local Inter-Agency ICT Working Groups established in Conakry, Freetown and Monrovia.
- A ICT needs survey has been developed and distributed to humanitarian organisations on the ground. The purpose of this survey is to understand what ICT services are being used, and what will be required to support the growing emergency response.
  https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Ebola_crisis_ICT_needs

GUINEA

- ICT assessments have been conducted in Conakry and Gueckedou.
- Local Inter-Agency ICT Working Group met on 28 August. Minutes available on the ETC Website.

SIERRA LEONE

- ICT assessments have been conducted in Port Loko, Moyamba and Makeni.

LIBERIA

- ICT assessment was conducted in Voinhjama.
- Local Inter-Agency ICT Working Group met on 4 and 17 September. Minutes available on the ETC Website.

Challenges and Gaps

- Logistics to and across the region remains a challenge as many airlines are cancelling flights. The UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) is establishing alternative solutions.
- Some internet and mobile phone service providers have expressed hesitation about intervening in affected areas.

Planned Activities

Across all three countries, ICT assessments in new operational areas will continue, as well as meetings with humanitarian partners on the ground to understand requirements.

GUINEA

- Following the last Inter-Agency ICT Working Group meeting in Conakry, plans are underway to establish a shared radioroom in Gueckedou.
- A project proposal is also being developed for the provision of shared security telecommunications services to humanitarian community in key operational areas across Guinea. This proposal will also include extension of the radio network in Conakry.

SIERRA LEONE

- ICT assessments are planned for Kanema, Kono and Kailahum.
- After meeting with humanitarian partners - including FAO, UNDSS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO – organisations have expressed interest in sharing ICT resources and assessing the need for enhanced security communications network.
- WFP will carry out ICT assessments in new WHO operational areas.

LIBERIA

- The Logistics Cluster has requested support to establish communications at the new office/ warehouse facility to be located at the football stadium in Monrovia.
- Based on the ICT assessment in Voinhjama, a proposal is being developed to extend the security communications network in this area as well as in new operational areas across Liberia.
- Save the Children requested WFP to assess common ICT services requirements for the two Ebola Treatment Units being setup in Kakata Margibi and in Gbamga areas.

Meetings

Global ETC teleconference: Wednesday 24 September

    09:00   New York
    13:00   UTC
    13:00   Dakar / Conakry / Freetown / Monrovia
    15:00   Rome
    17:00   Dubai

Local ETC meeting

- *Guinea:* Thursday 25 September, 2014
- *Sierra Leone:* Tuesday 23 September, 2014
- *Liberia:* Monday 22 September, 2014

ETC Services

Because the ETC has not yet been activated in response to the Ebola emergency, there are currently not ETC services available. Humanitarian partners are, however, working together and sharing information for a coordinated response.

Maps of proposed ETC services can be downloaded here:
http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictepr/emergencies2014/ebola-outbreak

Acronyms

ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: Global.ETC@wfp.org

Background on the crisis:

In March 2014, a rapidly evolving outbreak of Ebola haemorrhagic fever started in Guinea. The outbreak subsequently spread to Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal. On 1 Aug, WHO and the government of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia launched a joint US$ 100 million response plan as part of an intensified international, regional and national campaign to bring the outbreak under control. On 8 Aug, WHO declared the Ebola outbreak in West Africa a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) (WHO, 8 Aug 2014). On 28 Aug, WHO issued a "roadmap" to scale up the international response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. On 16 Sep, the Overview of Needs and Requirements document was presented to UN Member States, which covers activities in the three most-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone for six months.

Sources: ReliefWeb