

Like the Ebola outbreak itself, the ET Cluster response to fight the deadly disease is unprecedented in scale and geographical coverage.

Humanitarians, governmental bodies and - for the first time - affected populations are being provided with essential communications support by the ET Cluster in West Africa.

An outbreak of Ebola was first reported in Guinea in March 2014. The virus rapidly spread to neighbouring Liberia and Sierra Leone, causing a regional crisis.

Although the Emergency Telecommunications (ET) Cluster is not officially activated, the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) mandated the World Food Programme (WFP) to respond as if the cluster was activated and to lead inter-agency Information and Communications Technology (ICT) efforts.



ET Cluster Response Pillars & Partners

1. ETU Communications Support

Internet connectivity & security communications in 8 Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs).

Voice communications to around 25 Community Care Centres (CCCs) & 'Rapid Response Teams'.

2. Common Humanitarian IT Services

Security telecoms services in 21 UN common operational areas & 24 NGO common operational areas.

Security telecoms equipment in 62 trucks & light vehicles.

Shared inter-agency internet available at 94 locations

3. Communications 4 Communities

In partnership with healthcare providers, establish technology services to allow patients to communicate with their families, including provision of 500 mobiles phones to patients.

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RESPONSE



ET Cluster Activities

GUINEA

- Connectivity and voice communications has been established in 5 ETUs.
- Security communications has been established for UN and NGO agencies is established in 11x locations with 2x remaining.
- Internet hotspots have been installed in Macenta and N'zerekore for 7 UN and NGO agencies.

LIBERIA

- The ET Cluster is providing satellite phones and internet connectivity for Rapid Response Teams and 2x NGOs.
- Security communications equipment have been installed in 47x light vehicles and trucks with 15x remaining. The vehicles will support transportation of inter-agency staff and humanitarian supplies.
- A dedicated UN and NGO radio network has been established in all 8 locations across the country.

SIERRA LEONE

- Provide internet connectivity, security communications and telephony services to 78 locations ranging from ETUs, CCCs, Operational Centres and inter-agency offices.
- Provide the National Ebola Response Centre with internet connectivity and telephony services to 3x Rapid Response and Stabilisation Teams and 12x District Command Centres.
- Security communications service provision is planned for in 16 locations throughout the country.

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) is a global network of organizations that work together to provide common communications services in humanitarian emergencies.

The cluster approach strengthens response effectiveness through ensuring predictable and sufficient capacity, leadership, partners, accountability and coordination.

In emergencies, members exchange information and expertise and provide personnel, equipment and solutions.

Staff from all humanitarian organizations can use ETC services, regardless of membership.

Representatives from humanitarian organizations interested in participating in inter-agency ICT services and information-sharing are encouraged to attend local working group meetings.

Funding

The current approved budget for the ET Cluster response is 8 million 225 thousand USD across the three countries.



For more information about the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) in West Africa, visit: www.ETCluster.org or contact: WestAfrica.ETC@wfp.org.

On behalf of the ETC, WFP thanks key partners for their contribution to this response.