

West Africa Ebola Crisis

Situation Report #12

Reporting period 01/06/15 to 02/07/15

These Situation Reports are distributed monthly. The next report will be issued on or around 31/07/15.

The Emergency Telecommunications (ET) Cluster has not been activated in response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. As there are clear needs across the three affected countries for ICT services, the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) has mandated the World Food Programme (WFP), as global ET Cluster lead, to respond as if the cluster was activated. The ET Cluster, its partners and membership are responding together for a coordinated response.

Regional Highlights

- On 30 June in Liberia, the dead body of a 17-year old man tested positive for Ebola. This is the first reported case of Ebola in Liberia since the country was declared Ebola-free seven weeks ago. In Sierra Leone and Guinea, although the number of new Ebola cases is decreasing in general and geographic coverage is now limited to a few districts, new cases continue to be reported on a daily basis. Around half of these cases arose from unknown sources of infection.
- As per the needs assessed on the ground, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ET Cluster) is reviewing its operations as follows:
 - In districts where there have been zero cases for the past 42 days or more, the ET Cluster will decommission internet connectivity equipment.
 - In districts where there have been Ebola cases registered in the past 42 days, the ET Cluster will maintain internet connectivity services.



"Internet plays a vital role to ensure an efficient coordination with surveillance teams deployed in the Ebola-affected communities, especially when it comes to getting the information on new Ebola cases & activating the procedures to transport the patients to the Ebola Treatment Units," says Director of the Direction Communale de la Santé in Conakry, where ET C provides internet connectivity. *Photos: WFP/ Lia Carboni*

- In line with the decommissioning strategy mentioned above, the ET Cluster has started working on a comprehensive Transition Plan aimed at ensuring a smooth transition of the services to commercial solutions, avoiding any possible interruptions in the services.
- The ET Cluster is providing internet services to 80x humanitarian facilities across the three affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Since the beginning of the operation, more than 2,100 users have registered to use the internet connectivity provided by the ET Cluster.
- The ET Cluster is providing radio services in 17x towns across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to ensure Ebola responders have access to secure telecommunications. Staff from various organizations have also received radio training to build local capacity.

Country Updates

Sierra Leone

- Ebola is currently present in: Kambia, Port Loko and Western Urban (the district that includes the capital, Freetown). The ET Cluster is providing shared internet connectivity in all three of these districts. In the last five weeks, an average of 20 Ebola cases were reported weekly.
- On 11 June, the President of Sierra Leone ordered a 21-day Ebola response surge in Ebola-affected chiefdoms in Port Loko and Kambia districts. On 16 June, the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC) launched *Operation Northern Push* which aims to achieve zero cases in Sierra Leone as soon as possible.
 - To support *Operation Northern Push*, the ET Cluster, in collaboration with the NERC, reviewed the original decommissioning strategy for the 12x NERC command centres using NetHope connectivity and will continue to:
 - Provide internet connectivity services in the NERC command centres in Kambia and Port Loko districts.
 - Provide internet connectivity services in the NERC command centres in Kambia and Port Loko neighbouring districts of Bombali, Tonkolili and Moyamba until 31 July.
- According to the ET Cluster decommissioning strategy, the ET Cluster is proceeding to demobilise internet connectivity equipment in the Ebola-free districts of Kailahun, Kono, Koinadugu, Bo, Bonthé and Pujehun.
 - The equipment to be decommissioned includes Ericsson Response 'WIDER' access control systems and Wi-Fi access point. Ericsson Response equipment has been decommissioned in Makeni, Koidu, Moyamba, Kenema and Bonthé.
 - The ET Cluster is contacting each facility using its services to agree on a date for decommissioning.

- Organisations maintaining their operations throughout the recovery phase have been strongly encouraged to seek alternative options for internet connectivity. To assist with this transition, the ET Cluster shared a list of local Internet Service Providers which may be able to provide commercial services.
- NetHope-funded connectivity services, outside of the *Operation North Push* NERC command centres, ended on 30 June. Organisations using Eutelsat satellite kits provided by NetHope may retain the satellite dish and modem if they sign a contract with SpeedNet, a local ISP.
- As of July 2, the ET Cluster in Sierra Leone is providing internet services to 39x humanitarian facilities. Since the beginning of the operation, more than 2,400 users have registered to use ET Cluster internet services.
- In partnership with the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the ET Cluster is providing the response community with Security Telecommunications services (two-way radio) across Freetown, Bo, Makeni, Port Loko and Koido.
 - All radio telecommunications infrastructures in these locations have been upgraded to Minimum Operating Security Standards and digital capacity.

Guinea

- Ebola is currently present in: Boké, Dubreka, Forecariah and Conakry.
- The ET Cluster in Guinea is providing internet services to 16x humanitarian facilities across Guinea.
 - 'WIDER' kits from ET Cluster member Ericsson Response, used to distribute and manage internet connectivity, are installed in Macenta and N'zerekore. In these locations, the ET Cluster has provided internet to 190x users since the beginning of the operation.
- In partnership with UNDSS, the ET Cluster is providing the response community with Security Telecommunications services across Conakry, Kissidougou, Gueckedou, Macenta and N'zerekore.
- According to the ET Cluster overall decommissioning strategy:
 - VSAT equipment has been decommissioned in Alima ETU in N'zerekore.
 - By 31 July, Ericsson Response WIDER equipment will be decommissioned in the remaining 5x ET Cluster sites in N'zerekore: UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP and UNICEF offices.

Liberia

- Following the new Ebola case reported in Liberia on 30 June, two more cases were reported in the same town in Margibi County on 2 July, while at least 100 contact cases are being closely monitored.

- The ET Cluster in Liberia is providing internet services to 25x humanitarian facilities. 200x humanitarian staff have used ET Cluster internet services since the beginning of the operation.
- In partnership with UNDSS, the ET Cluster is providing the response community with Security Telecommunications services across Monrovia, Buchanan, Gbarnga, Voinjama, Zwedru, and Harper.
- The ET Cluster submitted to OCHA a wide-ranging transition plan. According to this plan, the ET Cluster will:
 - Decommission ICT services in sites no longer needed, including ETUs.
 - Organise capacity building activities for local staff.
 - Handover the ICT services in logistics bases, in line with the Logistics Cluster transition plan.
 - Handover the ET Cluster radio infrastructure to UNDSS, which is responsible for inter-agency radio services.
- In line with the above, the ET Cluster decommissioned NetHope VSAT equipment in Bopolu ETU, where ET Cluster is also supporting two customers using NetHope VSATs to transition to local service providers.
- The ET Cluster is working with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to extend the existing MoU for the provision of ICT services in Forward Logistics Bases (FLB) and Main Logistics Bases (MLB) for the period July-December 2015.

Meetings

Due to the reduced number of participants on the West Africa Global ET Cluster teleconferences, it was agreed to merge the West Africa ET Cluster Teleconference with the Joint Global ET Cluster Teleconference, which is held monthly.

The next **Joint ETC Global teleconference** will be held on Wednesday 15 July 2015 at:

08:00 New York
12:00 UTC
12:00 Dakar / Conakry / Freetown / Monrovia
14:00 Rome
16:00 Dubai

Information

- The new ET Cluster website went live on 02 July, 2015. Re-developed with enhanced design, navigation and functionality, the new website provides operational support for ICT responders in emergencies, information about the ET Cluster, its services, activities and impact as well as a channel for Global ET Cluster Coordination.

- To access all functionalities and documents on the new site – including meeting minutes and sitreps – you must be logged in. Accounts of users who have not logged in in 2015 will not be migrated and they must re-apply for credentials. For more information, visit: www.ETCluster.org
- Dedicated information-sharing space has been created on the ETC website: <http://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/west-africa-ebola-outbreak>. Organisations involved in the ICT response are encouraged to share updates with the ET Cluster community to support the overall coordination.
- **ETC services maps:**
 - Sierra Leone, Eastern Region: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-sierra-leone-eastern-region-1-july-2015>
 - Sierra Leone, Northern Region: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-sierra-leone-northern-region-1-july-2015>
 - Sierra Leone, Southern Region: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-sierra-leone-southern-region-1-july-2015>
 - Sierra Leone, Western Region: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-sierra-leone-western-region-1-july-2015>
 - Liberia: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-liberia-01-july-2015>
 - Guinea: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-guinea-01-july-2015>

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Acronyms

ET Cluster	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
FLB	Forward Logistics Base
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
MLB	Main Logistics Base
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NERC	National Ebola Response Centre
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNMEER	UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
WFP	World Food Programme

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

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

Follow the ET Cluster's activities on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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, Senegal and Mali. In August 2014, 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. WHO also declared the Ebola outbreak in West Africa a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). In January 2015, an updated overview of needs and requirements for January-June 2015 was launched to outline the path to eliminate transmission and get to zero cases (estimated cost: US\$ 1.54 billion).

Sources: ReliefWeb