

West Africa Ebola Crisis

Situation Report #13

Reporting period 03/07/15 to 20/08/15

These Situation Reports are distributed monthly. The next report will be issued on or around 20/09/15.

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

- In the last month, the number of confirmed cases of Ebola in the region has drastically decreased.
 - In the week ending 16 August 2015, there were three confirmed cases of Ebola, all of which were reported in Guinea.
 - In the last two weeks, the number of contacts under observation has halved from 1,600 to 800.
- The demand for Emergency Telecommunications (ET) Cluster support has decreased accordingly and the Cluster will phase out by the end of October 2015. Comprehensive transition plans for each country have been defined with the aim of ensuring a smooth transition of the services to commercial solutions, avoiding any possible interruptions in the services.
 - Users have been informed about ET Cluster transition plans through emails, formal letters of agreement as well as ET Cluster local meetings.
 - To ensure the continuity of services beyond the end of October, the ETC is supporting users to transition the services to local Internet Service Providers (ISP).
 - As of 20 August, the ET Cluster is providing internet services to 33x humanitarian facilities across the three affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Since the beginning of the operation, more than 1,600 users have registered to use the internet connectivity provided by the ET Cluster.

- The ET Cluster is also providing radio services in 21x 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.
- At the beginning of August, Pastor Lovo was replaced by Michael Ngisiro as Sierra Leone ICT Coordinator. As of 1 September, Roberto Salazar will be replaced by Habib Shashati as Guinea ICT Coordinator.

Country Updates

Sierra Leone

- The week ending 16 August was the first full week with no confirmed Ebola cases reported in the country since the beginning of the outbreak.
- ET Cluster services in Sierra Leone are currently being provided in districts where Ebola still exists: Port Loko, Kambia and Western Urban Area.
 - As of 20 August, the ET Cluster is providing internet services to 16x humanitarian facilities.
 - Since the beginning of the operation, more than 1,400 users have accessed ETC 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, Koido and Kenema.
 - All radio telecommunications infrastructures in these locations have been upgraded in line with Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) and digital capacity. The equipment will be handed over to UNDSS.
- The ET Cluster will leave the country at the end of October 2015. According to the Sierra Leone ET Cluster Transition Plan, the phase out will happen in three main steps:
 - On 31 August, all services currently provided by ET Cluster will be discontinued.
 - From 1 to 30 September, ET Cluster will proceed to decommission the equipment in place.
 - Ericsson Response WIDER kits will be decommissioned and shipped back to Sweden.
 - VSATS equipment still in place will be either handed over to WHO, or decommissioned and made available to other ongoing ETC operations.
 - From 1 to 31 October, the ET Cluster will focus on finalizing the hand-over paperwork.

Guinea

- The three confirmed cases reported from Guinea in the week ending 16 August are all registered contacts, and are now receiving treatment in Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs).
- As of 20 August, the ET Cluster in Guinea is providing internet services to 5x humanitarian facilities in Nzerekore, Conakry and Kissidougou prefectures. 75x humanitarian staff have used ET Cluster internet services since the beginning of the operation.
- In partnership with the UNDSS, the ET Cluster is providing the response community with security telecommunications services in Conakry, Kissidougou, Gueckedou, Macenta and N'zerekore prefectures.
- The ET Cluster will leave the country at the end of September. According to the ET Cluster Transition Plan:
 - Internet connectivity services currently provided by ET Cluster will transition to local ISPs. The equipment in place, if not handed over, will be decommissioned and shipped out.
 - Ericsson Response WIDER Equipment has already been decommissioned.

Liberia

- No new cases of Ebola were reported in Liberia in the week ending 16 August. All contacts in Liberia have now completed their 21-day follow-up period. The last two patients with EVD in Liberia were discharged after completing treatment and testing negative for EVD for a second time on 23 July.
- As of 20 August, the ET Cluster in Liberia is providing internet services to 12x humanitarian facilities. 155x 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, Harper, Foya, Saclepea and Tubmanburg.
- The ET Cluster will leave the country at the end of September. In line with Liberia ET Cluster transition plan, the ET Cluster will:
 - Decommission the ICT services in sites no longer needed, and support users to transition the services to local ISPs.
 - Hand over the ICT services in logistics bases.
 - Hand over the ET Cluster radio infrastructure to UNDSS, which is responsible for inter-agency radio services.



Meetings

Due to the reduced number of participants on the West Africa Global ET Cluster teleconferences the West Africa ET Cluster Teleconference is now part of the Joint Global ET Cluster Teleconference, which is held monthly.

The next **Joint ETC Global teleconference** will be held on Wednesday 16 September 2015 at:

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

- **ETC services maps:**

- Sierra Leone: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-sierra-leone-14-august-2015>
- Liberia: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-liberia-14-august-2015>
- Guinea: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-guinea-14-august-2015>

Contacts

WestAfrica.ETC@wfp.org

Regional ICT Emergency Coordinator and Liberia ICT Coordinator
Rami Shakra,
rami.shakra@wfp.org
+231 770 469 907

Guinea ICT Coordinator
Roberto Salazar
roberto.salazar@wfp.org
+224 6246 17206

Sierra Leone ICT Coordinator
Pastor Lovo
pastor.lovo@wfp.org
+232 76 74 79 25

Regional ETC Information Management Officer
Lia Carboni
lia.carboni@wfp.org
+232 78 34 36 85



Acronyms

ET Cluster	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
FLB	Forward Logistics Base
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISP	Internet Service Provider
MLB	Main Logistics Base
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
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