West Africa Ebola Crisis

Situation Report #14

Reporting period 21/08/15 to 30/09/15

These Situation Reports are distributed monthly. The next report will be issued on or around 30/10/15.

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

* Initially planned to begin phasing out in September 2015, the ET Cluster operation in West Africa has been extended until the end of the year, allowing response efforts to continue in areas still fighting Ebola, and ensuring sufficient time to build local capacity.
	+ The Response and Transition plans for the three Ebola Affected Countries, which detail how to ensure a smooth transition of the services to commercial solutions, have been updated accordingly.
* The ET Cluster is currently providing connectivity services in 37x sites across the three affected countries. At the peak of the operation, the ET Cluster provided connectivity services to over 3,300 users in 91x sites.
* The ET Cluster continues to provide two-way radio services in 20x common operating areas across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to ensure the response community has access to secure telecommunications for their safety in the field.
* As part of a unique project, the ET Cluster continues to provide ICT support directly to the World Health Organisation (WHO) to assist its goal of reaching zero cases across the three affected countries.
* The ET Cluster is closely monitoring the new cases of Ebola reported in Guinea and Sierra Leone which could trigger additional support from the ET Cluster.

# Country Updates

**Sierra Leone**

* ET Cluster internet connectivity services are being provided at 10x humanitarian facilities across Bombali, Kambia, Kono, Port Loko, Tonkilili and Western Urban Area.
* In partnership with the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the ET Cluster is providing security telecommunications services (two-way radio) across Freetown, Bo, Makeni, Port Loko, Koido and Kenema.
* After decommissioning 2x ET Cluster sites in Port Loko at the end of August, a mission was carried out to ensure users in these areas had continued access to internet services from national providers.
* The Ericsson Response team has successfully completed its deployment in Sierra Leone and WIDER equipment – used to manage and distribute internet connectivity - will be shipped back to Sweden in preparation for the next ETC emergency operation.
* A new staff member from the World Food Programme (WFP) has joined the ET Cluster team to support the WHO project until mid-November. The ET Cluster is supporting WHO operations in Sierra Leone by providing internet connectivity to 4x WHO offices and 3x WHO guesthouses across the country.

**Guinea**

* Installation of 6x telecommunication towers was successfully completed in September as part of the security telecommunications upgrade to expand radio coverage in Guinea,
	+ During the early stage of the Ebola emergency response, the need for new telecommunications towers across the three affected countries was identified due to the poor existing infrastructure. Installing towers helped to build a more robust and reliable radio network for humanitarian organisations responding to the emergency.
* As of 27 September, the ET Cluster in Guinea is providing internet services to 5x humanitarian facilities in Nzerekore, Conakry and Kissidougou prefectures.
* In partnership with the UNDSS, the ET Cluster continues to provide security telecommunications services in Conakry, Kissidougou, Gueckedou, Macenta, N’zerekore and Forecariah prefectures.

**Liberia**

* As of 27 September, the ET Cluster in Liberia is providing internet services to 13x humanitarian facilities in the following districts: Monrovia, Gbarnga, Voinjama, Zwedru, Buchanan, Harper, Sinje, Sanniquellie and Bopolu.
* In partnership with UNDSS, the ET Cluster is providing security telecommunications services across Monrovia, Buchanan, Gbarnga, Voinjama, Sinje, Zwedru, Bopoli and Sanniquellie.
	+ The handover of the ET Cluster security telecommunications network to UNDSS, the agency responsible for inter-agency radio services in Liberia prior to the Ebola emergency, will be completed by the end of December 2015.

# Meetings

The next **Joint ET Cluster Global teleconference** will be held on Wednesday 21 October 2015 at:

08:00 New York

12:00 UTC

12:00 Dakar / Conakry / Freetown / Monrovia

14:00 Rome

16:00 Dubai

* **ET Cluster services maps:**
	+ Sierra Leone: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-sierra-leone-23-september-2015>
	+ Liberia: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-liberia-23-september-2015>
	+ Guinea: <http://www.etcluster.org/document/etc-service-map-guinea-14-august-2015>

# Contacts

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# Acronyms

ET Cluster Emergency Telecommunications Cluster

EAC Ebola Affected Countries

FLB Forward Logistics Base

UNDSS UN Department of Safety and Security

WFP World Food Programme

WHO World Health Organisation

**All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website:** [**www.ETCluster.org**](http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictepr/emergencies2014/ebola-outbreak)

**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**

**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