

Nepal - Earthquake

ETC Situation Report #01

Reporting period 25/04/2015 to 28/04/2015

Highlights

- 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal, 81km from Kathmandu, on Saturday 25 April. More than 4,000 deaths have already been reported.
- The earthquake caused destruction of national infrastructure. GSM and internet services are still operational in Kathmandu however the full extent of damage outside of the capital is still being assessed.
- Travel into the country is a major challenge with commercial operators rerouting or completely cancelling flights due to congestion on the runway in Kathmandu.
- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) has been activated and a response team deployed.

Situation Overview

A massive 7.9 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal on Saturday 25 April, with the epicentre in the small town of Gorkha, roughly halfway between Pokhara and Kathmandu, 81km away. Tremors were felt hours after the initial shock and as far afield as Pakistan, Bangladesh and neighbouring India. Over 4,000 deaths were reported in the first few days with the full extent of the destruction still being uncovered.

The humanitarian community has mobilized to support the emergency operation. The ETC was activated on 27 April along with all the clusters.

Local Internet Services Providers (ISP) are still operational in Kathmandu. Mobile phone networks in Kathmandu are online too, however very congested. Power supply has been interrupted. As fuel supply rapidly depletes, base stations will lose power and services may disconnect.

Response

- An ETC response team comprising 1x Coordinator, 4x Technical Specialists, 1x Communication Officer from emergency.lu, Ericsson Response and World Food Programme (WFP) have deployed to Kathmandu as well as a NetHope Coordinator.
 - The team is carrying 2x WIDER kits – equipment to share and manage Wi-Fi internet connectivity.



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- emergency.lu has deployed 1x Rapid Deployment kit from Luxembourg to provide internet services. 2x additional emergency.lu kits, that are no longer required in the Vanuatu operation, are being rerouted to Nepal.
 - An emergency.lu Regular Deployment kit has been in Dadeldhura, Nepal since 2013 providing internet connectivity to humanitarian organisations operating in this area. This kit was unaffected by the earthquake and continues to provide internet services.
 - 4x satellite kits for internet connectivity (VSAT) were prepositioned in World Food Programme (WFP) Nepal and 2x kits in UNICEF prior to the earthquake. This equipment is available to the response operation.

Planned Response

- Upon initial information, in close cooperation with the Government of Nepal, the ETC is planning the provision of shared internet connectivity and security telecommunications services in 5x locations including Kathmandu as the hub and a site on the border with India which will be established as a logistics hub.
- The ETC is gathering offers for support from partner organisations.

Challenges

- Travel into the country is a major challenge for the operation. Runway congestion in Kathmandu has meant cancellation or rerouting of numerous commercial flights.
- Power supply has been interrupted and generators are now the only means of electricity. As petrol and diesel supplies deplete, power will be increasingly challenging.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC Nepal teleconference will take place Tuesday 28 April at 11:00 UTC.

Information

- ICT responders operating on the ground in Nepal are encouraged to share their contact details with Nepal.ETC@wfp.org to facilitate local coordination.
- Dedicated information-sharing space has been created on the ETC website: <http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictopr/emergencies2015/nepal>. Organisations involved in the ICT response are encouraged to share updates with the ETC community to support the overall humanitarian response.





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Acronyms

BGAN	Broadband Global Area Network – <i>portable global satellite internet network with telephony</i>
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
GSM	Global System for Mobile communications
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nations
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal – <i>satellite equipment to provide internet connectivity</i>
WFP	World Food Programme

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

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