

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – Conflict

ETC Situation Report #4

Reporting period 16/06/18 to 21/09/18

The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo was activated on 20 November 2017. Under the global leadership of the World Food Programme (WFP), the ETC is coordinating the ICT response with government, the private sector and humanitarian partners on the ground.

Highlights

- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) continues to provide shared security telecommunications services to support humanitarian operations in the Kasai region, South Kivu and Tanganyika.
- Given the recent Ebola outbreak in Beni (North-Kivu), the World Health Organization (WHO), leading the Ebola response, has formally requested the support from the ETC to evaluate the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) needs in affected areas. The ETC conducted an assessment mission in North-Kivu jointly with WHO.



Situation Overview

The Ministry of Health in DRC along with humanitarian organizations are responding to an Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak since 1 August 2018, with the epicenter being Mangina town in Mabalako Health Zone, North Kivu Province, in the east of the country. Confirmed cases have also been reported from Beni Health Zone (North Kivu Province) and Mandima Health Zone (Ituri Province).

The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with humanitarian organizations monitoring and investigating alerts in other provinces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in neighboring countries.

North Kivu and Ituri are among the most populated provinces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. North Kivu shares borders with Uganda and Rwanda. The provinces have been experiencing intense insecurity and a worsening humanitarian crisis, with over one million internally displaced people and a continuous efflux of

refugees to neighbouring countries, including Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania.

ETC Response

- Following the official WHO request for ETC support in view of the recent Ebola outbreak in Beni (North-Kivu), the ETC and WHO jointly assessed the ICT needs of humanitarian responders in the affected areas as well as the resources required. This mission finished on 2 September. The ETC is preparing the assessment report for WHO.
 - The ETC supported the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in programming and installing a radio repeater in the common Communication Centre (COMCEN) deployed in Mangina, 25 km from Beni. In addition, the ETC trained four radio operators and a WHO technician in programming the new digital radio devices (both HF and VHF).
 - To ensure humanitarian responders can use the security telecommunications provided by the ETC efficiently, the ETC programmed 60x WHO handheld radios in Beni.
- The ETC deployed Very High Frequency (VHF) and High Frequency (HF) services as well as COMCENs in Kananga (Kasai) and Uvira (South-Kivu). In the Kasai region, the ETC deployed
 - In Kananga the ETC is offering programming handheld services to United Nations (UN) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).
 - In Uvira, the ETC completed the deployment of the radio infrastructure and services which are fully operational.
 - In Lusenda (South-Kivu), the ETC completed the deployment of VHF security telecommunications services to support the Burundian refugee situation.
- In Kasai, the ETC deployed VHF and HF services in Mbuji-Mayi, Kananga and Tshikapa, including a COMCEN. The ETC also trained the radio operators to efficiently manage the COMCEN. In Tshikapa, the ETC finalized the deployment of VHF and HF radio services and a COMCEN with trained radio operators.

Planned Response

- As soon as the procured equipment arrives in DRC, the ETC will upgrade the security telecommunications infrastructure in Baraka, Kabalo and Nyuzu.

Challenges

- Volatile security conditions in the affected areas is the main challenge that humanitarian responders are currently facing.
- Lengthy customs processing times have an impact on the timely impact of ETC services across DRC to support humanitarian operations.

Funding

- The ETC received US\$600,000 from the Central Emergency Response Fund - Rapid Response (CERF RR) fund to further upgrade security telecommunications in Kasai, Sud-Kivu and Tanganyika provinces. The ETC has received a 3-month extension of the CERF funds until the end of October to complete the project.

Meetings

- The next Global ETC teleconference on the ETC activities in DRC, Central African Republic (CAR) and Nigeria will be held on 3 October 2018.

Information

- Information on the ETC activities in DRC can be found at: www.etcluster.org/emergencies/democratic-republic-congo-drc-complex-emergency
- The latest ETC dashboard is available in the following link: www.etcluster.org/document/etc-drc-dashboard-august-2018

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Acronyms

CERF RR	Central Emergency Response Fund - Rapid Response
COMCEN	Communications Centre
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
HF	High Frequency
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
MONUSCO	UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
UN	United Nations
WFP	UN World Food Programme
VHF	Very High Frequency
WHO	World Health Organization



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

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