

Cox's Bazar – Refugee Crisis

ETS Situation Report #7

Reporting period 01/04/18 to 30/04/18

Following the increased needs to support the humanitarian efforts in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis, World Food Programme (WFP), in its capacity as global lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), is supporting the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) by addressing common Information and Communication Technology (ICT) needs. Through the establishment of the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) WFP and its partners ensure a coordinated ICT response and support to those working on the provision of life-saving assistance to the affected populations.

Highlights

- The equipment needed for upgrading and expanding the coverage of the UN common security telecommunications network is now in Cox's Bazar.
- The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) provided radio training to 44 staff from six UN agencies: International Organisation for Migration (IOM), UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), and World Food Programme (WFP).
- The Global ETC Coordinator visited some of the information hubs and spoke to humanitarians that are using the ETC Connect app in the field.



The ETS providing security telecommunications training to UN drivers in Cox's Bazar.

Photo: WFP/ Sekou TRAORE

Situation Overview

As of 26 April 2018, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) reported 693,000 Rohingya refugees crossed the border into Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh since late August 2017.

The refugees remain reliant on humanitarian assistance for food, and other lifesaving aid. The Rohingya population in Cox's Bazar is highly vulnerable, after generations of statelessness even before the severe traumas inflicted by this most recent crisis. They are now living in congested sites that are at risk of landslide and flood and not well equipped to handle the early rains, monsoon and cyclone seasons.

In preparation of the monsoon season, the relocation of people at risk of landslides or floods remain one of the top priorities in the coming weeks. The humanitarians in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh are preparing more safe land to relocate people at risk.

ETS Response

- Equipment to upgrade the security telecommunications network arrived in Cox's Bazar during the third week of April.
- The ETS finalized the configuration of the equipment in preparation for its deployment.
 - The ETS finalised the configuration of the equipment in preparation for deployment of the Very High Frequency (VHF security telecommunications services in five sites: Cox's Bazar, Dumduniah, Kanjarpara, Kutupalong/Ukiya, Shamlapur/Marine Drive. Assessments of these sites have been conducted.
 - The ETS dismantled VHF/Ultra High Frequency equipment in Teknaf that will be used to deploy the VHF security telecommunications network.
 - The ETS provided six radio training sessions for UN staff, including 38 drivers and six radio operators from six UN agencies (IOM, UNDSS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP).
 - The ETS provided support to UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM to install an ICOM VHF base station in the UNDSS Communications Centre (COMCEN) and to program radios.
- In terms of preparedness, the ETS met with the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) to define the principle of the concept note of collaboration. A plan of action is now in place.
- The ETS finalized the memorandum of understanding (MOU) to provide internet access, multimedia kits and power electrical equipment in 40 information hubs that are being implemented by six organizations (International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), IOM, Radio Naf, Terre de Hommes (TdH) and UNHCR, and UNICEF). The MOU has been shared with all six organizations for their approval. The ETS plans to deploy the equipment in two information hubs to analyse the feasibility before the scale up.
- To support inter-sector initiatives aimed at fulfilling the information and communications needs of affected communities through the Communicating with Communities (CwC) WG, the ETS is formalizing the principle of the collaboration with the Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB) to extend the coverage of the community Radio Naf from 50% to 90% in the operational area.
- The handover between the current and the new ETS coordinator was held during the last week of April. The Global ETC Coordinator joined the team in Cox's Bazar for two days to participate in the handover as well as meeting with the WFP IT head of unit in Dhaka. During this period, the team conducted a field mission to get feedback and recommendations from partners regarding the ETC Connect app and the information hubs.

Planned Response

- In close collaboration with the local government agencies and mobile network operators (MNOs) in Cox's Bazar the ETS is implementing the activities defined in the cyclone preparedness work plan. At the same time, the ETS is looking at long-term preparedness in the country by advocating for the activation of the ETC at the national level.
 - The ETS will support the CPP in enhancing its telecommunications network in Cox's Bazar.
 - The ETS will look at the feasibility of implementing a short business radio (SBR) solution to enable Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to communicate in case of natural disaster.
- The ETS is looking for local tower providers to relocate the current VHF security telecommunications structure to existing towers and also to increase the height for better coverage.
- The ETS is going to deploy internet connectivity in the two Logistics hubs located in Madhuchara and Dumdumnia for the use of humanitarians.
- The ETS is finalizing the principle of collaboration with ACLAB to expand the coverage of the community Radio Naf in Ukyia.

Funding

- The ETS in Cox's Bazar is 70% funded out of the US\$1,201,115 requested to cover its activities until December 2018.

Meetings

- The next Joint Global ETC Teleconference on the Rohingya refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar will take place on Wednesday 20 June at 13:00 UTC.

Information

- Information on the ETS in Cox's Bazar can be found on: www.etcluster.org/emergencies/bangladesh-refugee-crisis
- The latest ETS Services map can be found here: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/ets-bangladesh-services-map-may-2018>

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Acronyms

ACLAB	Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh
ASMT	Area Security Management Team
BTRC	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
CiC	Camp in Charge
COMCEN	Communication centre
CwC	Communicating with Communities
DFID	UK's Department for International Development
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
FITTEST	WFP's fast IT, telecommunications and coordination support services team
FLA	Field Level Agreement
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFRC	International Federation Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership
ISCG	Inter sector coordination group
IT	Information Technology
IMO	Information Management Officer
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCG	Inter-Sector Coordination Group
ISP	Internet Service Provider
JRP	Joint Response Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
S4C	Services for Communities
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module
TdH	Terre des Hommes
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
WG	Working Group
WFP	World Food Programme

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:

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