

Cox's Bazar – Refugee Crisis

ETS Situation Report #1

Reporting period 29/09/17 to 28/10/17

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) Working Group (WG), 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

- Within the framework of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) Coordinator has conducted several assessments of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) needs in the Cox's Bazar region.
- The Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) was launched on 23 October 2017 – the ETS is planning to support 45 humanitarian organisations with inter-agency communications services and is requesting US\$ 650.000 for that purpose.
- The ETS is engaging with the Communicating with Communities (CwC) Working Group to conduct the community needs assessment among the Rohingya population, and to support implantation of Services for Communities (S4C).



Due to ongoing violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State, more than 600,000 people have fled from Myanmar into Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar since August 2017.

Photo: WFP / Saikat Mojumde

Situation Overview

The recent escalation of violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State has led to a renewed influx of Undocumented Myanmar Nationals (UMN). Since August 2017 approximately 607,000 people have crossed the border from Myanmar to Bangladesh. Thousands more reportedly remain stranded in Myanmar without the means to cross the border into Bangladesh. Currently, Bangladesh hosts more than 800,000 Rohingya refugees, and this number continues to increase daily.



ETS Response

- The ETS is convening a local ETS Working Group (WG). Terms of References for the ETS WG have been approved by the members and made available on the [ETC website](#).
- The ETS Coordinator deployed to Cox's Bazar between 28 September and 27 October to conduct an initial needs assessment to determine ICT capacity and gaps. Security telecommunications and Internet connectivity assessments were conducted in Kutupalong.
- A telecommunications specialist from World Food Programme (WFP) Fast Information Technology and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST) conducted the assessment and mapped the radio coverage for security telecommunications in Cox's Bazar and the surrounding operational areas – Ukiya, Kutupalong, Teknaf, Leda and Nayapara.
- Under the coordination of the ISCG, the contingency planning for the cyclone season is currently underway. The ETS WG provided its preparedness plans for the season.
- The ETS is engaging with the CwC WG to explore possibilities for the provision of services to affected populations.
- The HRP was launched on 23 October 2017 during the pledging conference to raise funds for this emergency – the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) is targeting 45 humanitarian organisations with inter-agency communications services and is requesting US\$650,000 for that purpose.

Planned Response

- The ETS will support the deployment of a new International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) camp by providing Internet connectivity to relief agencies and humanitarians.
- An ETC Services for Communities (S4C) advisor will deploy to Cox's Bazar to engage further with the CwC WG as well as with local actors, including local Mobile Network Operator (MNO) and community radios.

Challenges

- Importing telecommunications equipment into Bangladesh can be a lengthy process, but the ETS is working closely with the government to obtain necessary permissions.
- As the cyclone season is approaching (October—November), contingency planning is underway.
- Limited funding remains the main challenge for this operation.

Funding

- The ETS is appealing for US\$650,000 to provide coordination, information management and common ICT services – security telecommunications and Internet connectivity – to humanitarians, while exploring the possibility of deploying ETC S4C.



Meetings

- The next Global ETS Teleconference on the Rohingya refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar will take place on Tuesday, 14 November 2017 at 12:00 UTC.

Information

- Information on the ETS in Cox's Bazar can be found on: <https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/bangladesh-refugee-crisis>
- The latest ETS Services map can be found here: <https://www.etcluster.org/document/bangladesh-myanmar-emergency-map-25-october-2017>

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Acronyms

CwC	Communicating with Communities
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IOM	International Organization for Migration
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNICEF	UN 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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