

Cox's Bazar – Refugee Crisis

ETS Situation Report #6

Reporting period 01/03/18 to 31/03/18

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 Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) complaint feedback mechanism tool, the ETC Connect mobile app, went live on 15 March.
- The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) continues to support inter-sector initiatives aimed at fulfilling the information and communications needs of humanitarian responders.
- The ETS is carrying out preparedness activities, such as supporting the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) ahead of the coming cyclone and monsoon season.



The ETS providing training to the mobile app users in Cox's Bazar.

Photo: WFP/ David Peterson

Situation Overview

As of 25 March 2018, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) reported 671,500 new arrivals in Bangladesh since the attacks by the Myanmar military erupted in late August 2017.

The refugees are now 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 extremely difficult conditions.

Population movements within Cox's Bazar are fluid. The Government of Bangladesh has allocated 2,000 acres of land in Ukhia for another refugee camp. With people already descending on Ukhia, humanitarians are moving fast to establish infrastructure and services in challenging conditions.

ETS Response

- The ETS continues working with local authorities and humanitarian coordination mechanisms to ensure all operational areas in Cox's Bazar are covered with relevant telecommunications services, including the deployment of Internet connectivity services in affected areas. The ETS has approval from local authorities to deploy Internet connectivity services in refugee camps for the use of humanitarians. The ETS is coordinating with the Site Management Sector, local Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to facilitate the service in these camps as soon as possible.
- The ETS conducted a security telecommunications assessment of Cox's Bazar to explore potential sites to install new equipment to improve security telecommunications coverage. This also an assessment to expand the coverage of local community FM radio NAF in Teknaf which will cover the camps in Kutupalong and Nayapara.
- The ETS continues to support inter-sector initiatives aimed at fulfilling the information and communications needs of affected communities through the Communicating with Communities (CwC) Working Group.
 - The ETS plans to expand the coverage of the local community FM radio NAF in Teknaf to reach affected populations and has conducted field missions to relocate the transmission tower to a location closer to the refugee camps. An agreement– will be finalized to formalize the ETS support to radio NAF.
 - The ETC Connect app went live on 15 March. New features were added to the app to enable data collection. The ETS provided training on how to use the ETC Connect mobile app to humanitarian staff from five organisations and CwC WG used it to collect data related to cyclone preparedness. An FLA will be developed to deliver training to field staff and feedback managers.
- The ETS and the CwC information hubs sub-group members have finalized the concept note for the inter-sector collaboration project. The concept note will be presented in the CwC Working Group meeting as a final formal step before implementing. The objective is to equip 40 information hubs managed by International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) with Internet connectivity services, multimedia equipment kit and electrical equipment (solar power generator kit & fuel-based generator).
- WFP's Regional IT Emergency Preparedness Officer completed his emergency preparedness assessment mission to Bangladesh after which he developed a work plan that comprises contingency planning, and how to enable remote access and mobile technologies ahead of cyclone season.
 - The ETS has approached IFRC to have a coordinated engagement with Cyclone Preparedness Plan (CPP) team.
- The ETS has recruited an Information Management Officer from Stand-by Partner, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agencies (MSB), to be based in Cox's Bazar. He is due to join the team by mid-April.

Planned Response

- In close collaboration with the local government agencies and 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 / ETS at the national level.
 - The ETS will support CPP (Cyclone Preparedness Programme) to strengthen CPP's telecommunications network in Cox's Bazar.



- The ETS will look at the feasibility to implement SBR (short business radio) solution to enable NGOs communications in case of natural disaster.
- The ETS will upgrade and expand the existing UN radio network in Cox's Bazar. Currently, the team in CXB is looking for local tower providers to relocate the current structure to existing towers and also to increase the height for better coverage.
- The ETS in collaboration with UNDSS will organize four radio training sessions for UN drivers and radio operators in April 2018 in Cox's Bazar.
- The ETS is finalizing the MoU between WFP and the organizations (IFRC, IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF) in charge of the information hubs to formalize the support that will be provided.
- The ETS is going to deploy the internet connectivity in the two logistic hubs located in Madhuchara and Dumdumnia.

Funding

- The ETS in Cox's Bazar is **66%** 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 25 April 2018 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-17-january-2018>

Key ETS Contacts

Bangladesh.ETS@wfp.org

LOCATION	NAME	TITLE	EMAIL
Cox's Bazar	Pastor Lovo	ETS Coordinator	pastor.lovo@wfp.org
Cox's Bazar	Sekou Traoré	Information Management Officer	sekou.traore@wfp.org



Acronyms

ASMT	Area Security Management Team
BTRC	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
CiC	Camp in Charge
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
IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information and Communications 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
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
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: Bangladesh.ETS@wfp.org