

Nigeria – Crisis

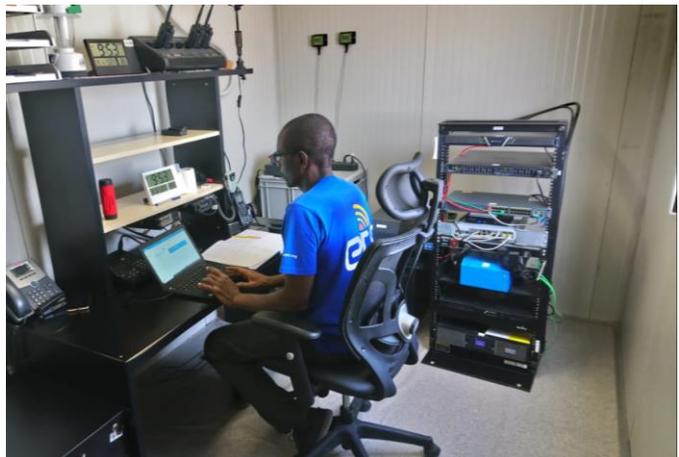
ETS Situation Report #29

Reporting period 1/03/19 to 31/03/19

As global lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), the World Food Programme (WFP) is convening the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) in Nigeria, responding with government, private sector and humanitarian partners on the ground to ensure a coordinated response. ETS SitReps are issued monthly.

Highlights

- The ETS in Nigeria received a contribution of US\$720,840 from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) / US Agency for International Development (USAID) continue providing and expand as require vital communications services across North-East Nigeria.
- Two connectivity kits part of the Crisis Connectivity Charter were sent to Maiduguri from Dubai to test the activation of the charter for preparedness purposes.
- Radio operators managing the Communications Centres (COMCEN) have been redeployed on 14 and 29 March to seven field humanitarian hubs.



The COMCEN in Damasak has been fully operational since March 2019.

Photo: WFP/ Ekue Ayih

Situation Overview

The security situation in the three north-eastern states of Nigeria, and particularly Borno State, has deteriorated. Conflict between non-state armed groups (NSAG) and the Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) has caused a wave of 72,000 new displacements since November 2018. Some 1.8 million people are now displaced, over 80 per cent in Borno State; and humanitarian access is highly constrained and complex.

In this context, more than 800,000 people are estimated to reside in areas that are inaccessible to humanitarian actors. In March 2019, the humanitarian hub in Damasak resumed operations after being more than five months not operational due to the volatile security situation.



ETS Response

- Due to the tense and unpredictable security situation in Damasak, the humanitarian hub and the COMCEN deployed at the hub were non-operational since mid-September 2018 until early March 2019. Following the re-opening of the hub, radio operators were deployed to make the COMCEN in Damasak operational first-ever. In addition, the ETS conducted a maintenance mission on the communications services deployed in Damasak to ensure their full operability.
- The election period from the end of February until early March resulted in restricted staff movement across North-East Nigeria as part of the security measures imposed on humanitarian organizations. After pulling out radio operators from deep field hubs during the elections period, they resumed activities on 14 March and 29 March in seven humanitarian hubs across Borno State.
- In order to strengthen the existing Emergency Communications Systems (ECS) in North-East Nigeria, the ETS deployed push-to-talk satellite voice services inside the bunkers at the field humanitarian hubs in Damasak, Gwoza and Monguno. During the reporting period, the ETS also carried out a maintenance mission on the communications services deployed in Bama.
- The ETS continues to support the delivery of the security telecommunications module during the Safe and Secure Approaches to Field Environments (SSAFE) training sessions taking place in Maiduguri. In March, the ETS trained 38 participants from eight organisations.
- The activation of the Crisis Connectivity Charter is being tested in Maiduguri- 2x satellite kits from Eutelsat were shipped from Dubai on 7 March and SES upgraded the bandwidth on the emergency.lu satellite terminal in Maiduguri to check how fast that can be done in a real emergency scenario.

Planned Response

- The ETS is planning to conduct maintenance missions in Banki, Ngala and Bama to continue a flawless provision of communications services.
- The ETS is discussing with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) the handover of connectivity services in the hubs planned for January 2020. In addition, the ETS is holding meetings with the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) to work on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and to prepare to the future handover of services as part of the ETS exit strategy.
- The ETS is looking into transitioning the WIDER system from ETC partner Ericsson Response, to manage and distribute Internet connectivity, into a more permanent solution -deployed already at the field hubs- in line with its exit strategy.

Funding

- The ETS operation in Nigeria in 2019 requires US\$3.4M to maintain the existing services and expand them to 4x planned operational areas. After receiving a contribution of US\$720,840 from OFDA/USAID, the ETS is currently 45 per cent funded.



Meetings

- The next Joint Global ETC teleconference covering Bangladesh, Nigeria and Central African Republic operations will be held on 24 April 2019.
- The next local ETS Working Group meeting in Maiduguri is scheduled for the third week of April at the Red Roof base camp (Mala Kachala House). Confirmed date will be communicated to partners by email.

Information

- ETS Nigeria information can be found on: www.etcluster.org/emergencies/nigeria-crisis
- The latest ETS Dashboard displaying where ETS services are available and planned can be found here: www.etcluster.org/document/ets-nigeria-dashboard-april-2019

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Acronyms

COMCEN	Communications Centre
ECS	Emergency Communications Systems
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAF	Nigerian Armed Forces
NSAGs	Non-State Armed Groups
OFDA	U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
SSAFE	Safe and Secure Approaches to Field Environments
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WIDER	Wireless LAN in Disaster and Emergency Response



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: Nigeria.ETS@wfp.org