Nigeria – Crisis

ETS Situation Report #10

Reporting period 1/08/17 to 31/08/17

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 recruitment of the three local staff to support the operation in the long term has been concluded.

- The ETS team conducted a follow-up mission in the humanitarian hubs in Gwoza and Ngala where Internet connectivity and security telecommunications services were deployed by the ETS.

- The ETS is organizing two sessions of the Let's Comm Analogue/Digital training in Maiduguri for the humanitarian community.

- The ETS is supporting the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) in the delivery of training for radio operators in Abuja and Lagos.

James Mukasa, Stand-by Partner from Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), delivering radio training to humanitarians in Bama.
Photo: ETS team

Situation Overview

The security situation remains volatile in North-East Nigeria following incidents of suicide bombings and attacks against civilians. Road travel is often impeded, and the rainy season is causing additional challenges to humanitarian access.

The ongoing refugee returns from Cameroon, Chad and Niger has put increased pressure on the already precarious displacement situation on the border towns of Banki, Gamboru, Ngala, Damasak and Pulka. The influx of returnees is severely stressing limited commercial existing services and aggravating the food and nutrition crisis.

The rainy season is starting to pose challenges slowing transportation in Nigeria which has a direct impact on the mobilization of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment to the humanitarian camps in North-East Nigeria.

ETS Response

- In line with the evolving needs and the Operational Humanitarian Country Team (OHCT) prioritisation plan of the humanitarian hubs, the ETS is getting ready to provide vital communications services in the sites as part of the second phase of the humanitarian hubs deployment: Rann, Banki, Damasak and Monguno.

- The ETS is assisting UNDSS/UN Development Programme (UNDP) in the recruitment process of 18x radio operators for the inter-agency Communications Centres (COMCENs) in Damaturu, and Maiduguri as well as in four humanitarian hubs. These positions are sponsored by the ETS. The written test was conducted in the third week of August in Abuja, Maiduguri and Damaturu.

- As part of the deployment of the Digital Mobile Radio network (DMR) in Maiduguri, the ETS team conducted a site survey where the new DMR repeaters (main and peer site) were deployed to check their performance. The master site (International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP) base camp) and the peer site (UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) office) are now linked and able to communicate with each other for testing purposes.

- The ETS team visited the humanitarian hubs in Gwoza and Ngala where communications services were deployed earlier.
    - In Gwoza, a radio training was delivered to eight staff from the International Rescue Committee (IRC) at their premises. As their handheld radios were not correctly programmed, the ETS will organize a mission to reprogram their radios and train additional staff.
    - Maintenance works on the data link at the hub in Gwoza were carried out to optimize the Internet services.
    - Following the recent storms that affected the infrastructure of the hub in Ngala, the ETS assessed the ICT equipment and services deployed. IHP is currently rebuilding the camp and once the power is stable, the ETS will organize a maintenance mission.

- A Stand-by Partner from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) join the ETS team as a radio trainer. He trained ten humanitarian responders from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Action Against Hunger (ACF) on standard radio procedures in Bama.

- As of the end of August, 445 humanitarians from 37 organisations at the IHP base camp in Maiduguri have used the Internet connectivity services provided by the ETS with the support of ETC members – the Government of Luxembourg and Ericsson Response.

- The ETS continues delivering radio training activities to end users and reprogramming services. Since the beginning of the operation, the ETS has trained over 400 humanitarians from 14 organisations and reprogramed over 600 handheld radios from 19 organisations.

- The recruitment of the three local staff (1x admin assistant, 1x IT assistant and 1x telecommunications assistant) to support the operation in the long term has been concluded. It is expected that they join the ETS team in the first week of September.

Planned Response

- The ETS is supporting UNDSS with training for radio operators which will take place in Lagos from 29 August to 1 September and in Abuja from 5 to 8 September.

- The ETS is organising two sessions of the Let's Comm Analogue/Digital training between the 11 and 22 September in Maiduguri. This training aims at building the security telecommunications skills of ICT staff part of the humanitarian response in North-East Nigeria to enable them to respond to the needs of their organisations as well as support their partners on ground.

- The ETS will deploy security telecommunications and Internet connectivity services at the humanitarian hub in Dikwa on 4 September.

Challenges

- The rainy season is hampering the timely establishment of the humanitarian hubs. Therefore, the deployment of ETS services at the planned hubs will take place after the rainy season; this is from September onwards.

- The ETS continues working on obtaining the required new radio frequencies for the North-East Nigeria with the relevant authorities.

Funding

- Given the pressing needs, the number of humanitarian hubs where the ETS will deploy vital communications services in North-East Nigeria has increased from six to nine. Thus, the ETS is revising its funding needs to respond accordingly.

Meetings

- The next Global ETS Nigeria teleconference will be part of the Joint Global ETC teleconference held monthly. The next teleconference is scheduled for 13 September.

Information

- ETS Nigeria information can be found on: https://www.etcluster.org/emergencies/nigeria-crisis

- The latest ETS Services map can be found here: https://www.etcluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/NGA_ETC_Services_A3L_20170814_0.pdf

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Acronyms

ACF	Action Against Hunger
COMCEN	Communications Centre
DMR	Digital Mobile Radio
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
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MSB	Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency
OHCT	Operational Humanitarian Country Team
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
VHF	Very High Frequency
WFP	UN 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: Nigeria.ETS@wfp.org